

Shipping the Medieval Military

CRAIG L. LAMBERT



English Maritime Logistics in the Fourteenth Century



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Shipping the Medieval Military

English Maritime Logistics in
the Fourteenth Century

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Detail from the Luttrell Psalter, BL, Add. MS 42130, folio 161v, showing a northern European vessel transporting troops. Note in particular the stern rudder, which was an advancement on the quarter rudder, and the endcastles containing an archer and a crossbowman. This illustration shows how cramped the conditions were likely to have been for soldiers aboard ships during logistical operations. © All Rights Reserved. The British Library Licence Number: BOYBRE03.

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English Maritime Logistics in
the Fourteenth Century

Craig L. Lambert

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FOR MY MOTHER AND FATHER

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Abbreviations

<i>Anonimalle</i>	<i>The Anonimalle Chronicle, 1333–81</i> , ed. V. H. Galbraith (Manchester, 1927)
<i>Avesbury</i>	Robert de Avesbury, <i>De Gestis Mirabilibus Regis Edwardi Tertii</i> , ed. E. M. Thompson, Rolls Ser. (London, 1889)
<i>Bain</i>	<i>Calendar of documents relating to Scotland 3 1307–1357</i> (Edinburgh, 1881–88)
<i>BIHR</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research</i>
<i>BND</i>	<i>British Naval Documents, 1204–1960</i> , ed. J. B. Hattendorf et al. (Aldershot, 1993)
<i>BPR</i>	<i>Register of Edward the Black Prince</i>
<i>Bridlington</i>	<i>Gesta Edwardi Terti Auctore Canonico Bridlingtonensi</i> , in <i>Chronicles of the Reigns of Edward I and Edward II</i> , vol. II, ed. W. Stubbs, Rolls Ser. (London, 1883)
<i>Brut</i>	<i>The Brut or the Chronicle of England</i> , ed. F. W. Brie (London, 1906–08)
<i>CCHR</i>	<i>Calendar of Charter Rolls</i>
<i>CCR</i>	<i>Calendar of Close Rolls</i>
<i>CFR</i>	<i>Calendar of Fine Rolls</i>
<i>Cal. Inq. Misc.</i>	<i>Calendar of Inquisitions Miscellaneous</i>
<i>Chapters</i>	T. F. Tout, <i>Chapters in the administrative history of England</i> (Manchester, 1920–33)
<i>CPR</i>	<i>Calendar of Patent Rolls</i>
<i>EcHR</i>	<i>Economic History Review</i>
<i>EHR</i>	<i>English Historical Review</i>
<i>Eulogium</i>	<i>Eulogium Historiarum</i> , ed. F. S. Haydon, 3 vols, Rolls Ser. (London, 1858–63), vol. 3
<i>Flores</i>	<i>Flores historiarum</i> , ed. H. R. Luard (London, 1890)
<i>Foedera</i>	<i>Foedera</i> , ed. T. Rymer, revised edn, 4 vols in 7 parts (London, 1816–69)
<i>Froissart</i>	<i>Oeuvres de Froissart</i> , ed. K. de Lettenhove, 28 vols (Brussels, 1867–77)
<i>Hemingburgh</i>	<i>Chronicon Domini Walteri de Hemingburgh</i> , ed. H. C. Hamilton Rolls Ser. (London, 1849)
<i>JBS</i>	<i>Journal of British Studies</i>
<i>JMH</i>	<i>Journal of Military History</i>
<i>JMMH</i>	<i>Journal of Medieval Military History</i>
<i>Knighton</i>	Henry Knighton, <i>Chronica de Eventibus Angliae a Tempore Regis Edgari Usque Mortem Regis Ricardi Secundi</i> , ed. and trans. G. H. Martin (Oxford, 1995)

<i>Lanercost</i>	<i>Chronicon de Lanercost, MCCI–MCCCXLVI</i> , ed. J. Stevenson (Edinburgh, 1839)
<i>Le Baker</i>	<i>Chronicon Galfridi le baker de Swynebroke (1303–56)</i> , ed. E. M. Thompson (Oxford, 1889)
<i>Le Bel</i>	<i>Chronique de Jean le Bel</i> , ed. J. Viard and E. Déprez, 2 vols (Paris, 1904–05)
<i>Melsa</i>	<i>Chronicon Monasterii de Melsa</i> , ed. E. A. Bond, 3 vols, Rolls Ser. (London, 1889)
<i>MM</i>	<i>Mariners Mirror</i>
<i>Murimuth</i>	Adam Murimuth, <i>Continuatio Chronicarum</i> , ed. E. M. Thompson, Rolls Ser. (London, 1889)
<i>Norwell</i>	<i>The Wardrobe Book of William de Norwell</i> , 12 July 1338 to 27 May 1340, ed. M. Lyon, B. Lyon, H. S. Lucas and J. De Sturler (Brussels, 1983)
<i>Polychronicon</i>	Ranulph Higden, <i>Polychronicon</i> , ed. C. Babington and J. R. Lumby, 9 vols, Rolls Ser. (London, 1865–86)
<i>RP</i>	<i>The Parliament Rolls of Medieval England, 1275–1504</i> , ed. C. Given-Wilson, M. Ormrod, et al. (Woodbridge, 2005)
<i>Rot. Scot.</i>	<i>Rotuli Scotiae</i> , ed. D. Macpherson et al., 2 vols (London, 1814)
<i>Scalacronica</i>	Sir Thomas Gray, <i>Scalacronica 1272–1363</i> , ed. and trans. with an introduction by A. King (Woodbridge, 2005)
<i>Tout, Chapters</i>	T. F. Tout, <i>Chapters in the administrative history of medieval England</i> , 6 vols (Manchester, 1920–33)
<i>TRHS</i>	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i>

A note on place names and personal names

In this book the names of ports, when possible, have been modernised. However, the names of the individuals involved in naval and military affairs that appear throughout this study have been kept as recorded by the original documents and only on occasion, because of the nature or damage of the source, have their names been modernised.

Introduction

In a very short time the wind had filled the sail and blown us out of sight of the land of our birth. And I tell you now that anyone who sets out on such a dangerous course is foolhardy. For at night you fall asleep without knowing whether you will find yourself the next morning at the bottom of the sea.¹

Let me tell you of the great peril that befell a Catholic king in the presence of the Old Pilgrim. This king was crossing the sea between Cyprus and Syria in company with other ships and galleys. The weather was fine. Suddenly a squall sprang up which did not last long but can be extremely dangerous if it strikes a ship with all sail spread. An old sailor said that it would be wise to lower the sail. But the captain paid no heed. Hit by another squall in such wise and with such violence that the ship went over on her beams-ends and was half under water. The great sail and topmast were in the sea.²

The two passages above suggest that maritime travel during the middle ages was a dangerous affair, and indeed it could be, as Edward III's return journey from his campaign in Brittany in 1343 amply shows; sea journeys could be perilous.³ Nevertheless, by the time Edward III crossed the Channel on 28 October 1359 English forces had already achieved many successful sea journeys to launch campaigns in France.⁴ If the numerous flotillas of the diplomatic embassies and trading vessels were added to these major expeditions, one could safely say that the English had, by this period, developed a safe and secure system of cross Channel communication and transportation. Nor is the maritime contribution to the Scottish wars of this period to be underestimated.⁵ Indeed, without

¹ Jean de Joinville on sailing to the seventh crusade, from N. Ohler, *The medieval traveller*, trans. C. Hillier (Woodbridge, 1998), p. 45.

² Le songe du vieil Pèlerin of Philippe de Mézières quoted by G. W. Coopland in 'A glimpse of late fourteenth-century ships and seamen', *MM* 48 (1962), pp. 186–92, p. 186.

³ *Anonimale*, pp. 17–18; *Knighton*, p. 47; *Melsa*, III, pp. 51–52; *Murimuth*, p. 135.

⁴ St Sardos 1324–25; the Low Countries campaigns of 1338–40, which account for two crossings; Brittany 1342–43; 1345; Crécy/Calais 1346–47; 1350 (the battle of Winchelsea) in addition to Edward's crossing to Calais; 1355; 1359. It needs to be borne in mind that some of these crossings involved more than one flotilla of ships.

⁵ M. Stanford Reid, 'Sea-power in the Anglo-Scottish war, 1296–1328', *MM* 46 (1960), pp. 7–23, makes some valuable comments on the maritime war of the period.

ships supplying garrisons and armies, blockading enemy ports and providing the surprise element inherent in amphibious landings, pursuit of Edwardian ambitions in Scotland would have been almost impossible. Despite the importance of this facet of Edwardian military capabilities, and the fact that it usually involved the mobilisation of more manpower and money than its land equivalent, the maritime dimension of king Edward's wars has received little attention over the years from scholars.⁶ The fleet that transported the king to Brittany in October 1342 numbered 487 ships and was manned by 8,796 mariners, while the land army it was transporting consisted of some 4,500 soldiers.⁷ Historians have yet to explore the implications of figures such as these.

This book will examine these figures with the aim of understanding more fully what maritime resources were available to Edward II and Edward III for use in their wars. As the majority of the ships utilised by the kings of this period were requisitioned merchant vessels, the inner process of this system of raising a fleet needs to be studied more closely. In addition, because the supply system that the land-based troops relied on was largely conducted at sea, an assessment needs to be made of the nature and effectiveness of the maritime contribution to logistical support. The main focus of the book is thus to assess the contribution made by maritime communities to the supply and transportation of troops during the period 1320–60.⁸

The period covered by this research arguably witnessed the greatest change in England's military community, and to her role as a major power in conti-

⁶ Notable exceptions being J. Sherborne, 'The hundred years' war. The English navy shipping and manpower, 1369–1389', *Past and Present* 37 (1967), pp. 163–75. *Idem*, 'The cost of English warfare with France in the later fourteenth century', *BIHR* 50 (1977), pp. 135–50; M. M. Postan, 'The costs of the Hundred Years War', *Past and Present* 27 (1964), pp. 34–53, p. 35.

⁷ C. Lambert, 'An army transport fleet of Edward III's reign: the maritime dimension of the Brittany campaign, 1342–3' (unpublished MA thesis, University of Hull, 2005), p. 85. The present book has slightly up-dated the latter study. The number of land-based personnel includes an estimation of the non-combatant element; the actual numbers of paid soldiers was 1,800 men-at-arms and 1,800 mounted archers. See A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses: military service and the English aristocracy under Edward III* (Woodbridge, 1999), pp. 14, 259.

⁸ Community in this book relates to a group of individuals who reside in ports and who are actively involved in the business of the sea. As such this includes merchants, burgesses, port officials, shipmasters, mariners and ship owners. The use of community does not extend to groups outside those listed above. So, for example, a carpenter providing planks for ships, although in some sense part of the maritime world, is not included in the definition of community here. It is also noted that each one of the above groups could in effect be an individual community in its own right. Nevertheless, when community is used in this book it generally means all those who resided in a port and who would of necessity be involved in the business of military maritime expeditions and would therefore participate in a collective activity; the logistics of war through their ownership of sailing craft, seafaring skills, involvement in the process of assembling fleets and negotiating with crown officials about access to naval resources. On the definitions of community in this period, see M. L. Honeywell, 'Chivalry as community and culture: the military elite of late thirteenth and fourteenth century England' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of York, 2006), pp. 37–45.

mental Europe, to have occurred during the middle ages.⁹ These changes, which have been characterised as a 'military revolution', have deservedly attracted much attention and debate.¹⁰ Nevertheless, the research carried out so far has understandably centred on the role of land-based personnel and the life and contribution of the gentry and aristocracy to military and public life.¹¹ Central to this new direction was the work of the pioneers of fourteenth-century military studies, such as J. E. Morris, T. F. Tout, A. E. Prince, H. J. Hewitt and N. B. Lewis, whose research laid the foundation for further study.¹² Indeed, our understanding of the fourteenth-century military community, although not complete, has gathered much pace in recent years, as new structural and methodological approaches have been adopted. The most influential historians of this new approach are Michael Prestwich, Philip Morgan and Andrew Ayton. Prestwich has increased our knowledge of the structure of the military community, its financial underpinnings and the role of its personnel and some of the earlier major developments.¹³ Morgan's important study on the military community of Cheshire increased our understanding of the relationships that existed between the men serving in

⁹ For example, A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, Chapter 1; *idem*, 'English armies in the fourteenth century', in *Arms, armies and fortifications in the Hundred Years War*, ed. A. Curry and M. Hughes (Woodbridge, 1994), pp. 21–39; C. J. Rogers, *War cruel and sharp: English strategy under Edward III* (Woodbridge, 2000) Chapter 1, which in part summarises his 'The military revolutions of the Hundred Years War', *JMH* 57 (1993), pp. 241–78.

¹⁰ For example M. Prestwich, 'Was there a military revolution in medieval England', in *Recognition, essays presented to E.B. Fryde*, ed. C. Richmond and I. Harvey (Aberystwyth, 1996), pp. 19–38.

¹¹ For example, see A. Ayton, 'The English aristocracy at the beginning of the hundred years war', in *Armies, chivalry and warfare in medieval Britain and France*, Harlaxton medieval studies 7, ed. M. Strickland (Stamford, 1998), pp. 173–207; M. Prestwich, *Armies and warfare in the middle ages: the English experience* (New Haven, 1996). For the gentry's public role, see N. Saul, *Knights and esquires: the Gloucestershire gentry in the fourteenth century* (Oxford, 1981), and *idem*, *Scenes from provincial life: knightly families in Sussex 1280–1400* (Oxford, 1986); M. H. Keen, 'Chivalry, nobility, and the man-at-arms', in *War, literature, and politics in the late middle ages*, ed. C. Allmand (Liverpool, 1976), pp. 32–45; A. Tebbit, 'Household knights and military service under the direction of Edward II', in *The reign of Edward II: new perspectives*, ed. C. Dodd and A. Musson (York, 2005), pp. 76–96.

¹² For example, J. E. Morris, *The Welsh wars of Edward I* (Oxford, 1901); Tout, *Chapters*; A. E. Prince, 'The strength of English armies in the reign of Edward III', *EHR* 46 (1931), pp. 351–71 but also, see *idem*, 'The army and navy', in *The English government at work, 1327–1366* (Cambridge, Mass., 1948); H. J. Hewitt, *The organization of war under Edward III*, 1338–62 (Manchester, 1966). Hewitt's book has since been re-printed as *The organisation of war under Edward III*, with a foreword by Andrew Ayton (Barnsley, 2005); N. B. Lewis, 'The recruitment and organisation of a contract army, May to November 1337', *BIHR* 37 (1964), pp. 1–19.

¹³ See M. Prestwich, *War, politics and finance under Edward I* (London, 1972); *idem*, *Armies and warfare*; *idem*, *The three Edwards: war and state in England 1272–1377* (London, 1980); *idem*, 'English armies in the early stages of the Hundred Years War: a scheme of 1341', *BIHR* 46 (1983), pp. 102–13; *idem*, 'Cavalry service in early fourteenth century England', *War and government in the middle ages*, ed. J. Gillingham and J. C. Holt (Woodbridge, 1984), pp. 147–58; *idem*, 'Miles in armis strenuous: the knight at war', *TRHS* 5 (1995), pp. 201–20.

the wars of the period.¹⁴ Ayton's work has fully introduced the available source material pertinent to the Edwardian military community, while his most recent contributions have centred on what can be termed 'network relational studies', an aspect of military service prosopography, in which the relationships that existed between the captains and their men are fully analyzed, as is the composition of Edwardian armies.¹⁵ These works have led to a greater understanding of the reasons for English success in the French war under Edward III.

Given the fact that the main focus of this book is the maritime resources available to Edward II and Edward III, what this brief survey of publications on the land-based personnel helps to show is how far the emphasis of English research has favoured the knights, esquires and their mounts, rather than the mariners, of the period. Indeed, no researcher has yet attempted the formidable task of a 'network study' on English shipowners, masters, and the familial relationships between the mariners and masters of the port communities. This would surely bear some fruit as even a quick glance at the records on these mariners reveals within the communities a strong family tradition of serving at sea and interlocking engagement in both trade and war. But, in many ways, research on the maritime aspect of England's wars in the fourteenth century has failed to keep pace with research on the land campaigns and the conventional (land-based) military community, especially in terms of the application of new methodologies and areas of study.

This is not to suggest that the maritime dimension of medieval England has been completely ignored; in fact, quite the contrary is the case. Studies of late medieval naval history have been written since the early nineteenth century and a keen interest was taken in the subject during the early twentieth century. Sir Nicholas Harris Nicolas undertook the pioneering work in this field in the mid nineteenth century.¹⁶ He utilised valuable record sources, such as pay accounts, before the Public Record Office existed. This research was followed with studies on the navy by C. D. Younge,¹⁷ W. Clowes,¹⁸ M. Oppenheim¹⁹ and later F. W.

¹⁴ P. Morgan, *War and society in medieval Cheshire* (Manchester, 1987).

¹⁵ A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*; idem, 'Knights, esquires and military service: the evidence of the armorial cases before the court of chivalry', in *The medieval military revolution: state, society and military change in medieval and early modern Europe*, ed. A. Ayton and J. L. Price (London, 1995); A. Ayton and Philip Preston, *The battle of Cr cy, 1346* (Woodbridge, 2005), especially Chapter 5, 'The English army at Cr cy'.

¹⁶ N. H. Nicolas, *History of the royal navy*, 2 vols (London, 1847).

¹⁷ C. D. Younge, *The history of the British navy from the earliest period to the present time* (London, 1863).

¹⁸ W. Clowes, *The royal navy: a history from the earliest times to the present* (London, 1897–1903).

¹⁹ M. Oppenheim, *A history of the administration of the royal navy and of merchant shipping in relation to the navy, 1509–1660* (London, 1961), pp.1–44 deals with the navy before 1509. Oppenheim's work was first published in 1896.

Brooks.²⁰ More recent research on the maritime aspects of this period can essentially be placed into four distinct categories: studies which concentrate on the ports; those which discuss the process of organising and operating a medieval fleet and the tactics adopted; those which concentrate on the ships themselves, how they were built and how they were used; and, finally, the research that has examined the seagoing labour force.

Studies of medieval ports are numerous. The confederacy of the Cinque Ports in particular has deservedly attracted much attention.²¹ In addition there is a wealth of information on other important port towns of England, such as Southampton,²² Portsmouth,²³ Bristol,²⁴ Exeter,²⁵ Colchester,²⁶ Great Yarmouth,²⁷ Hull²⁸ and King's Lynn.²⁹ The maritime history of the Channel Islands is another area that has been researched.³⁰ This list not exhaustive. The second category of research, the organisation and tactical use of fleets, has probably attracted by far the largest interest. An understanding of how a fleet was raised and administered can be gleaned from studies by T. J. Runyan,³¹ S. Rose³²

²⁰ F. W. Brooks, *The English naval forces 1199–1272* (London, 1932). See also the works by A. E. Prince, 'The navy' in *The English government at work 1327–1366* and H. J. Hewitt, *The organisation of war*.

²¹ For example M. Burrows, *Cinque ports* (London, 1888); F. W. Brooks, 'The Cinque Ports', *MM* 15 (1929), pp. 142–91 (this piece includes full transcriptions of the charters of 1206); *idem*, 'The Cinque ports feud with Great Yarmouth in the thirteenth century', *MM* 19 (1933), pp. 27–51; K. M. E. Murray, 'Faversham and the Cinque Ports', *TRHS* 18 (1935), pp. 53–84; N. A. M. Rodger, 'Naval service of the Cinque ports', *EHR* 111 (1997), pp. 631–51.

²² For example, C. Platt, *Medieval Southampton: the port and trading community AD 1000–1600* (London, 1973).

²³ For example, M. Houd, 'The origins of Portsmouth', in *Hampshire studies presented to Dorothy Dymond*, ed. J. Webb, S. Peacock and N. Yates (Portsmouth, 1961), pp. 1–30.

²⁴ For example, *The overseas trade of Bristol in the later middle ages*, ed. E. M. Carus-Wilson (London, 1967).

²⁵ M. Kowaleski, *Local markets and regional trade in medieval Exeter* (Cambridge, 1995).

²⁶ R. H. Britnell, *Growth and decline in Colchester, 1300–1525* (Cambridge, 1986).

²⁷ For example, A. Saul, 'Great Yarmouth and the Hundred Years War in the fourteenth century', *BIHR* 52 (1979), pp. 105–15.

²⁸ For example, W. R. Childs, *The trade and shipping of Hull 1300–1500* (Hull, 1990).

²⁹ *The making of King's Lynn: a documentary survey*, ed. D. M. Owen (Oxford, 1984).

³⁰ W. Stevenson, 'The middle ages, 1000–1500', in *A people of the sea: the maritime history of the Channel Islands*, ed. A. G. Jamieson (London, 1986), pp. 19–43; J. Le Patourel, 'A fourteenth century list of Guernsey ships and shipmasters', in *Guernsey Quarterly Review* (autumn, 1964–65), pp. 4–7.

³¹ For example, T. J. Runyan, 'The English navy in the reign of Edward III' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Maryland, 1972); *idem*, 'The organisation of royal fleets in medieval England', in *Ships, seafaring and society: essays in maritime history*, ed. T. J. Runyan (Detroit, 1987), pp. 37–52.

³² *The navy of the Lancastrian kings: accounts and inventories of William Soper, keeper of the king's ships 1422–1427*, ed. S. Rose (London, 1982). Also, see S. Rose, *Medieval naval warfare 1000–1500* (London, 2002).

and G. Cushway.³³ The tactical use of fleets and ships during this period has also been widely studied, both with reference to specific battles and to the operational deployment of fleets.³⁴ Of particular interest in this field is the work of N. A. M. Rodger, J. Sherborne and I. Friel among many others.³⁵ The strategic use of ships and seapower during this period, although well researched, generally paints a less than positive picture of the understanding that governments had of naval strategies and tactics during the Hundred Years War.³⁶ This present book seeks to challenge this by bringing to light the complexities of the bureaucratic procedures involved in raising a fleet and by so doing show that the Edwardian kings and their advisors had a firm grasp of the advantages to be gained through careful management of the kingdom's maritime resources and by the deployment of fleets. Research on ships has also gathered pace and this has been helped in many ways by improved archaeological techniques. For example, there have been numerous studies on the ships of the Vikings and those of the Mediterranean city-states.³⁷ However, from an English perspective the most common type of ships in the period researched here were cogs, barges and ballingers.³⁸

³³ G. R. Cushway, 'The lord of the sea: the English navy in the reign of Edward III' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Exeter, 2006).

³⁴ For example, K. DeVries, "God, leadership, Flemings and archery," Contemporary perceptions of victory and defeat at the battle of Sluys, *American Neptune* 55 (1995), pp. 223–42.

³⁵ For example, N. A. M. Rodger, *The safeguard of the sea: a naval history of Britain, 660–1649* (New York, 1998); J. Sherborne 'The battle of La Rochelle and the war at sea, 1372–5', *BIHR* 42 (1969), pp. 17–26; I. Friel, 'Oars, sails and guns: the English and the war at sea, 1200–1500', in *War at sea in the middle ages and renaissance*, ed. J. B. Hattendorf and R. W. Unger (Woodbridge, 2003). See also T. J. Runyan, 'Naval power during the Hundred Years War', *ibid.*, pp. 53–67 and his 'Ships and fleets in Anglo-French warfare', *American Neptune* 46 (1986), pp. 91–99. See also A. T. Hall, 'The employment of naval forces in the reign of Edward III' (unpublished MA thesis, University of Leeds, 1955–56); J. S. Kepler, 'The effects of the battle of Sluys upon the administration of naval impressment', *Speculum* 48 (1973), pp. 70–77; S. Rose, *The medieval sea* (London, 2007), Chapter 5, which concentrates on the war at sea during the hundred years war.

³⁶ For example J. Sumption, *Trial by battle* (London, 1990–99), who is less than positive about the capabilities of the fleets and administration of this period. A more positive appraisal of the maritime contribution can be found in C. Richmond, 'The war at sea', in *The hundred years war*, ed. K. Fowler (London, 1971), pp. 96–121 and the collection of journals edited by Hattendorf and Unger, *War at sea in the middle ages and renaissance*, particularly the introduction and conclusion.

³⁷ For example, O. Olsen and O. Crumlin-Pederson, *Five Viking ships from Roskilde Fjord*, trans. B. Bluestone (Copenhagen, 1978); A. W. Brogger and H. Shetelig, *The Viking ships: their ancestry and evolution*, trans. K. John (Oslo, 1954); L. Mott, *Sea power in the medieval Mediterranean: the Catalan and Aragonese fleet in the war of the Sicilian vespers* (Gainesville Fla, 2003).

³⁸ See, for example, J. R. Smith, 'Hanseatic cogs and Baltic trade: interrelations between trade, technology and ecology' (unpublished MA thesis, University of Nebraska, 2010); J. Sherborne, 'English barges and ballingers of the late fourteenth century', *MM* 63 (1977), pp. 109–14.

The cog was a vessel with a large cargo capacity and a high freeboard, which ideally suited it to the northern seas. It generally had a single square sail, a stern rudder and a flat bottom, and was clinker built. Other types of ships, such as galleys, did make an appearance during this period, but they were never suited to long periods of service at sea in the rough tidal waters of the English Channel, Irish Sea and North Sea. Again, the development of these ships can be charted through considerable scholarship.³⁹ The final category of research has concentrated on the mariners themselves. This being said although there are accessible works on this subject medieval seafarers have usually been dealt with in short articles, and the detailed sources that would allow a study of some shipmasters on similar lines to those used for the landed gentry have not yet been investigated.⁴⁰ It is also true to say that an examination of the English merchant fleet in the fourteenth century, and its role in the wars of that era, has been a neglected area. Although we have several works that focus on this area none have specifically examined the overall contribution to these conflicts and the implications of this for English shipowners. Indeed, when compared to the research on fifteenth-century maritime studies, there has been remarkably little produced for the preceding century.⁴¹

³⁹ For example, R. W. Unger, *Ships and shipping in the North Sea and Atlantic, 1400–1800* (Aldershot, 1997). And *Cogs, caravels and galleons: the sailing ship 1000–1650*, ed. R. W. Unger (London, 1994). See also J. H. Parry, *Discovery of the sea: an illustrated history of men, ships and the sea in the fifteenth century and sixteenth century* (London, 1974). On galleys, see J. T. Tinniswood, 'English galleys, 1272–1377', *MM* 35 (1929), pp. 276–315; F. W. Brooks, 'The king's ships and galleys, mainly under John and Henry III', *MM* 15 (1933), pp. 27–51. And *idem*, 'William de Wrotham and the office of the keeper of the king's ports and galleys', *EHR* 40 (1925), pp. 570–79. On other northern ships, see C. W. Carpenter and J. Turner, 'The building of the Grace Dieu, Valentine and Falconer at Southampton, 1416–1420', *MM* 40 (1954), pp. 55–72. And also, see G. Hutchinson, *Medieval ships and shipping* (London, 1994). Another important book on ships of the medieval period is P. Marsden, *Ships of the port of London: twelfth century to seventeenth century*, English Heritage archaeological report S (London, March, 1995). Marsden uses the latest techniques of archaeology to draw firm conclusions from a variety of evidence including wrecks of ships and harbour walls.

⁴⁰ For example T. J. Runyan, 'Ships and mariners in later medieval England', *JBS* 16 (1977). See also R. Miller 'The early medieval seaman and the church: contacts ashore', *MM* 89 (2003), pp. 132–50. But also, see *idem*, 'The man at the helm: the faith and practice of the medieval seafarer, with special reference to England, 1000–1250' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of London, 2002). Miller's work is done so however with an eye to theological concerns. Finally, S. Rose, *The medieval sea*, Chapter 4 discusses some aspects of port life and the people who inhabited the ports. See also R. Ward, *The world of the medieval shipmaster: law, business and the sea, c.1340–c.1450* (Woodbridge, 2009).

⁴¹ On the fifteenth century, see G. V. Scammell, 'English merchant shipping at the end of the middle ages: some east coast evidence' *ECHR* 13 (1961), pp. 327–40; *idem*, 'Shipowning in the economy and politics of early modern England', *The Historical Journal* 15 (1972), pp. 385–407; *idem*, 'Shipowning in England, 1450–1550' *TRHS* (1961), pp. 105–22; D. Burwash, *English merchant shipping, 1460–1540* (Newton Abbot, 1969).

As was mentioned above a central objective of this book is to examine the role and contribution played by the maritime communities of England during the period 1320–60 in supplying troops in both Scotland and France. The issue of victual supply has been dealt with in the past, but it has mainly concentrated on the system of purveyance, the victualling of garrisons and the supply of armies from an overland point of view.⁴² There has been a little research on seaborne supply but this has tended to concentrate solely on the French war and brings out only general points.⁴³ Yet the regular system of supply in both of these theatres of war relied heavily on waterborne transport.⁴⁴ The Scottish campaigns in particular were dependent on victuals transported by sea.⁴⁵ The garrisons of Scotland, such as Berwick, Edinburgh and Perth, could not have

⁴² For example, H. J. Hewitt, *The organisation of war*, Chapter 3. M. Prestwich, 'Military logistics: the case of 1322', in *Armies, chivalry and warfare in medieval Britain and France*, ed. M. Strickland, Harlaxton medieval studies 8 (Stamford, 1998), pp. 276–88. See also Prestwich, *War politics and finance*, Chapter 5. A short guide to M. Prestwich's ideas on victual supply can now be found in *Plantagenet England, 1225–1360* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 250–59. Also, see S. J. Burley, 'The victualling of Calais, 1347–65', *BIHR* 31 (1958), pp. 49–57; C. Allmand, *The hundred years war: England and France at war c.1300–c.1400* (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 96–102. A good short survey of victual arrangements in the fourteenth century can also be found in C. Candy, 'An exercise in frustration: the Scottish campaign of Edward I, 1300' (unpublished MA thesis, University of Durham, 1999), Chapter 5. The exception is M. K. Vaughn, 'For the circumstances must dictate the proper means: a study in the history of logistics with special reference to thirteenth century England' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Reading, 1999), see Part II for a discussion on medieval logistics. Vaughn's work discusses the theories and doctrine with regard to logistics, both modern and medieval.

⁴³ See T. J. Runyan, 'Naval logistics in the late middle ages: the example of the Hundred Years War', in *Feeding Mars: logistics in western warfare from the middle ages to the present*, ed. J. A. Lynn (Oxford, 1993), pp. 79–102; M. Vale, *The Angevin legacy and the hundred years war, 1250–1340* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 200–15. Three excellent studies of supplying armies in the French wars: M. K. Vaughn, '"Mount the warhorse, take your lance in your grip ...": Logistical preparations for the Gascon Campaign of 1294', in *Thirteenth Century England* 8, ed. M. Prestwich, R. Britnell and R. Frame (2001), pp. 97–111; Y. N. Harari, 'Strategy and supply in fourteenth century western European invasion campaigns', *JMH* 64, pp. 297–333; R. A. Kaner, 'The management of the mobilisation of English armies: Edward I to Edward III' (unpublished PhD thesis, York University, 1999): this thesis analyses in detail the organisation of supplies and transport of the 1322 campaign, the war of St Sardos and Edward's wars up to 1359. But, specifically on supply, see pp. 217–30. The lack of a concentrated effort to study the supply system has been noted in D. S. Bachrach, 'Military logistics during the reign of Edward I of England, 1272–1307', *War in history* 13 (2006), pp. 423–40, p. 424, although it must be noted that Bachrach's piece concentrates on the transportation of provender overland.

⁴⁴ C. Candy, 'The Scottish wars of Edward III' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Durham, 2004), Chapter 10 details the role that ships played in the supply operations well as a general discussion on the participation of the navy during the wars in Scotland.

⁴⁵ Transportation by sea was favoured because freighting victuals by this method usually cost the crown much less in monetary output, with waterborne transportation being anywhere up to eight times cheaper than supplies freighted over land: see J. Masschaele, 'Transport costs in medieval England', *EcHR* 46 (1993), pp. 266–79, p. 273.

existed without regular and sufficient supplies carried largely by ships. Supply fleets in the French wars were less regular and in some cases less important. For example, English armies serving in Gascony essentially campaigned in a block of territory controlled by Edward III as duke of Aquitaine. Therefore supplies could be obtained through local communities. Nevertheless, as we shall see, English forces crossing to Gascony were usually careful to take at least some victuals with them. Those English troops that campaigned in northern France had to be supplied with help from regional allies (as in 1338–40) or they had to bring enough supplies to last several weeks. Of course, an army could always try to live off the countryside it traversed; but this form of supply could not be guaranteed and a careful commander would always make sure his men had ample food for at least a few weeks at the start of a campaign. Seen in this light the logistical capabilities of the English merchant fleet were paramount to any successful campaign and garrison operation in enemy territory.

From the foregoing discussion it can be seen that this book has one central aim, which is to bring to light the sophistication of English maritime logistics in the fourteenth century. Its focus, then, is on the four areas that English shipping was most heavily involved with. Chapter 1 addresses the procedural and administrative capabilities of the crown during this period, paying particular attention to the bureaucratic procedures adopted by the English government when it needed to requisition a sufficient number of ships to serve in both supply and transport fleets. Chapter 2 examines the role that ships played in the supply of English royal campaigns and garrisons between 1320 and 1360 within Scotland and France, as well as their military participation as combatants in the expeditions of the period. Included is a discussion on the issue of horse transportation. The chapter deals first with the period between 1322 and 1336, because this was the time of the greatest military intensity in the Scottish wars. Second, the discussion focuses on the campaigns launched between 1337 and 1360, a period that witnessed a reduction in the military resources committed by England to the Scottish wars. Nevertheless, the aim of this chapter is to show the type and quantities of victuals transported and the number of ports, ships and mariners involved in these operations. In addition, the naval contribution to the king's wars of the period, specifically in Scotland, is assessed because this helps us to understand just how burdensome the demands of the crown on the merchant fleet were in this period. It also allows us to reconstruct/follow for the first time on any scale the involvement of individual ships and their crews in the wars of the two Edwards.

Chapter 3 considers the composition of the many royal transport fleets of the period. The objective here is to discover how many ports, ships and mariners were involved in each royal transport armada of the period, and how many men and horses they were required to transport. Chapter 4 concentrates on several issues that have been raised throughout the previous chapters and will analyse the overall management of the maritime resources that were exploited by the English crown. Moreover, within Chapter 4 the careers of several masters and

mariners will be put forward to demonstrate that shipmasters were an integral part of the Edwardian military machine, with a collective expertise that was vital to the English war effort. There is also an analysis of the effects of the Black Death on the availability of shipping and ships. Such issues provide tentative steps towards a greater understanding of the size and distribution of the merchant marine during this period.

Raising a Fleet

Raising a fleet of ships for either transportation of troops or delivery of victuals was a complex operation. Although in the past the procedure for assembling a fleet of requisitioned merchantmen has been described as relatively straightforward a more detailed examination of the process provides evidence of an underlying sophistication. Not only was a large team of clerks required but also sergeants-at-arms, bailiffs, sheriffs and shipmasters. These groups would work separately or together in order to supply the required numbers of ships demanded by the crown. Yet the workings of this procedure and the sheer scale of the task is little understood. We do have an outline of the careers of some of the clerks and we know something of the methods they employed to raise an armada in the fourteenth century. But the system of arrest, muster and review that the clerks had to undertake in order to untangle all the information generated by the process of requisitioning large numbers of ships, from hundreds of ports, into payrolls with exact dates of service is yet to be fully appreciated. Therefore, in order to show the complexities and sophistication of this process this chapter is divided into four sections. The first section includes a discussion of the methods employed by the crown during this period to assemble a fleet. Following this is an analysis of the types of requisition orders that were issued, the implications of these orders for ship owners and a discussion on the men who organised naval expeditions. Third, there is an examination of the bureaucratic procedure that underpinned the raising of an armada. Finally, we examine how the fleet-raising procedure was altered after 1342, before examining the problem of return transport for troops in the field.

Sources of Shipping

In the fourteenth century the king had nine sources from which he could assemble a fleet for his use.¹ The first and most important source of ships was to requi-

¹ The historiography to date stresses that the king only had three methods of collecting ships. See, for example, *BND*, p. 33; T. J. Runyan, 'Naval logistics', pp. 79–81; D. Hannay, *A short history of the royal navy 1217–1688* (London, 1912), pp. 9–11; A. T. Hall, 'The

sition merchant vessels. This prerogative right of the crown had its origins in Anglo-Saxon times, but the Edwardian kings stretched the meaning of this right to the limit.² The call on merchant ships to provide military service was originally only to defend England from attack, yet all three Edwards requisitioned fleets for the offensive purpose of transporting invading armies to various kingdoms. Of course, these offensive armadas were justified by the king because technically he was defending his Scottish and continental possessions and rights. This process did provoke criticism however. For example, when Edward I requisitioned a fleet in 1297 he assured the ports that the service he asked from them in no way would be taken as a precedent and he mainly relied on his usual mixture of appeals to patriotism and threats to persuade the seaports to comply with the request.³ This being said vessels 'arrested' from the merchant fleet remained by far the largest element of any armadas that put to sea during this period. For instance, in the Low Countries campaigns of 1338–40 Edward III commanded the services of 370 ships, of which the majority were merchant vessels; and in 1342 out of 675 ships serving as transports during the Brittany campaign, 665 were supplied by the merchant fleet.⁴ These contingents suggest that the merchant contribution was of paramount importance.

A second source was the king's own ships. These were vessels owned by the king and used personally by him for his transportation and supply needs. These ships never served in large numbers during the military expeditions and they would only provide for the king's requirements and possibly those of his immediate circle of advisors and clerks. For example, in the Scottish campaign of 1322 Edward II had access to ten of his ships.⁵ Yet even with such numbers of vessels for his own use he still found it necessary to employ William le Prest, master of the *Michel* of Hull, to carry his victuals.⁶ In fact, on 23 June 1323 the king himself

employment of naval forces', Chapter 3; C. Candy, 'The Scottish wars of Edward III', pp. 240–43. J. Sherborne, 'Shipping and manpower', p. 166, notes four ways in which a king could raise a fleet by including in his assessment the hiring of ships from foreign kingdoms. On clerical officials involved in fleet raising, see T. J. Runyan, 'The English navy in the reign of Edward III', Chapter 4, which deals with Thomas Snetesham and Willim Clewer; *idem*, 'A fourteenth century cordage account for the king's ships', *MM* 60 (1974), pp. 311–28, which details the career of Matthew de Torkeseye; *The navy of the Lancastrian kings*, ed. S. Rose, pp. 6–27, which charts the career of William Soper.

² On the Anglo-Saxon antecedent of requisition, see F. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 3rd edition (Oxford, 1971), p. 431.

³ M. Prestwich, *War, politics and finance*, p. 142.

⁴ B. Lyon, 'The infrastructure and purpose of an English medieval fleet in the hundred years war', in *Handelingen der maatschappij voor geschiedenis en oudheidkunde te Gent* (Ghent, 1997), pp. 61–76, p. 67. For 1342, see Chapter 3, pp. 128–36 below. Twelve ships that served in 1342 were foreign so the English merchant fleet contributed 653 ships.

⁵ BL, Stowe MS 553, fols 76r–76v.

⁶ *Ibid.*, fol. 76v.

felt it necessary to board a private vessel at Hull to take him back to London:⁷ it seems that his own ships had completed their service by April and were unavailable for his return voyage.⁸ Edward III's royal fleet was just as insufficient as his father's. For example, during the Roxburgh campaign of 1334–35 Edward III only had two royal vessels serving.⁹ Though this campaign was conducted during the winter, expeditions undertaken in the summer months also failed to produce large numbers of royal ships. For instance, during the much larger expedition conducted over the summer of 1335 Edward III still had only two royal ships on active service.¹⁰ This probably reflects the fact that Edward had thrown off the yoke of Mortimer and Isabella only five years before this campaign, and for three of these years he had not been at war and had no need of a large royal fleet.¹¹ Edward's continental ambitions soon altered this situation and by October 1342 he had ten royal ships serving in the Brittany campaign.¹² The fact that only small numbers of royal vessels served should not be taken as evidence that the king only owned a few ships. On the contrary, by the middle of the fourteenth century the crown certainly possessed large numbers of ships, but these never seem to have formed a major part of military campaigns. The most ships that the king contributed to any one fleet were the twenty-five vessels that participated in the 1346 transport fleet.¹³ The reason for this is that the king's vessels were hired out to merchants and carried out other duties for the crown. A further explanation is that the king owned only part shares in many of the vessels that have hitherto been described as 'king's ships', which meant he was not entirely in full control of their duties. As such at any one time their numbers were diluted.¹⁴ In short, the king's vessels only provided a small core of ships around which to build a larger armada.

The third way in which the king could raise a fleet was to call upon the service owed to the crown by the Cinque Ports. The Ports, according to their charters, were to provide fifty-seven ships, each manned by twenty-one mariners, for fifteen days.¹⁵ This could be commuted so that a smaller number of vessels

⁷ *Ibid.*, fol. 77r. The ship was the Cog *Saluatozis* of Dartmouth commanded by Gilbert Coleman.

⁸ *Ibid.*, fol. 76v. The last ship of the king's to complete its service was the *James* of Westminster commanded by John Lutle and crewed by forty-eight mariners: they served until 6 April 1323.

⁹ BL, Cotton MS, Nero C.VIII, fol. 264r. These were the *Welfare* and an unnamed barge, commanded by John Pettot and Thomas Springet.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, These were commanded by Thomas Springet (the *Cegedware*) and Hugh de Reppes (the *Rodecogge*).

¹¹ *Foedera*, II, ii, p. 698; SC1/42, no. 59. In March 1327 Edward had sold some of the ships remaining from his father's reign.

¹² E36/204, p. 221; E101/20/39, nos 12, 41, 45.

¹³ BL, Harleian MS 3968, fol. 132r.

¹⁴ See G. R. Cushway, 'The lord of the sea', pp. 83–106. Cushway argues that Edward III owned or had shares in over 100 ships.

¹⁵ CCHR, 1300–1326, p. 32; F. W. Brooks, *English naval forces*, p. 84.

were provided but for a longer period. The history of this service has attracted much attention, particularly the origin of such obligations; but the issue that concerns us here is how many ships they provided during the period covered by this study.¹⁶ In the 1322 campaign Edward II did call on the obligatory service of the Ports and none of the Ports' ships are included in the *vadia nautarum* section of the Wardrobe accounts, which suggests they were serving for no pay.¹⁷ Yet this evidence of obligatory service is contradicted elsewhere because other sources make it clear that the full quota of fifty-seven ships was not ordered, and instead the Ports were commanded to contribute twenty-seven ships.¹⁸ This trend continued at speed during the fourteenth century and by the time of Edward III's Scottish and French campaigns the Ports' obligations to provide ships in return for local freedoms had ceased. Indeed, the evidence points to the fact that unless there was an issue of a feudal summons, such as happened in 1322 and 1327, the ships supplied by the Ports were paid their full wages for their service that usually went beyond fifteen days.¹⁹ For example, in 1342 Thomas Symond, master of the *Nicholas* of Sandwich, and sixteen mariners were paid £4 14s 6d for twenty-one days' service and the rest of the Cinque Ports ships which served during this campaign received pay commensurate with their days of service.²⁰ Nevertheless, the Cinque Ports continued to play an important role as advisors to the crown in naval affairs, they still provided large numbers of

¹⁶ For example, see F. W. Brooks, *English naval forces*, Chapter 6 and A. T. Hall, 'The employment of naval forces', pp. 41–51.

¹⁷ CCR, 1318–23, p. 533.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 708.

¹⁹ See N. A. M. Rodger, 'Naval service of the Cinque Ports', pp. 392–403; C. Lambert, 'An army transport fleet', p. 84; A. T. Hall, 'The employment of naval forces', p. 42. Recent criticisms of the importance of the Cinque Ports as ship providers are not entirely supported by an examination of the sources. For example, in the 1338 Low Countries transport fleet Winchelsea (equal with Hull) was the second largest supplier of ships after Great Yarmouth, and in the 1342 Brittany campaign only London and Great Yarmouth provided more vessels than Winchelsea: Winchelsea supplied 17 ships in 1338 and 25 in 1342, see Norwell, pp. 366–67; E36/204, p. 226. In fact, if there was a league table of England's ports ranked according to their contribution of ships to the wars of Edward II and Edward III, Winchelsea would be in a respectable fourth position, while Sandwich would only be placed below towns such as Newcastle, Hull, King's Lynn, Great Yarmouth, Ipswich, Dartmouth and Southampton. See BL, Add MS 7967, fol. 99v; BL, Cotton MS, Nero C.VIII, fol. 265r; Norwell, pp. 366–70; C47/2/35; E36/204, pp. 222–26; E101/17/10; E101/17/24; E101/18/35; E101/19/22; E101/19/38; E101/19/39; E101/21/7; E101/389/8, m. 16; CCR, 1318–23, pp. 533, 591, 660; CCR, 1330–34, p. 410; CCR, 1333–37, pp. 22, 25, 29, 652; CCR, 1337–39, p. 216; CCR, 1343–46, pp. 128–32; *Foedera*, II, ii, p. 703; *Rot. Scot.* I, p. 212; *Rot. Scot.* I, pp. 225, 226, 232, 233, 234, 248–49. See also D. Martin and B. Martin, *New Winchelsea, Sussex: a medieval port town* (London, 2004), who argue that the size and importance of Winchelsea should be reconsidered and that it may have been much larger than previously thought. For recent criticisms of the contribution of the Ports to the wars in this period, see N. A. M. Rodger, *Safeguard of the sea*, p. 125.

²⁰ E36/204, p. 222.

ships for expeditions and their ports were regularly used as embarkation points for continental campaigns.²¹

Another method that the crown employed to raise ships involved making non-financial contractual agreements with shipowners and port burgesses. Such contracts were drawn up so that the specified parties would provide an agreed number of ships. Thus, in 1335 Thomas Gargrene, clerk, formed an agreement with John de la More, William Grenole and William Cholare, all from Liverpool. This indenture stated that they would provide the ship *Nicholas* well armed and victualled for the king when required.²² Similarly the burgesses of Dartmouth agreed to supply two ships of 120 tuns burthen, *dupplici eskippamentum*, to 'follow the king whenever he calls upon other ships of the realm to set forth, and to remain with him for forty days.'²³ In return the providers of these ships would usually be granted freedom from local tolls and other taxes. From Edward's point of view agreements such as these could bolster the numbers in his paid fleets and also reduce the administrative duties of his clerks because it was not necessary to include these ships in the bureaucratic process.

The fifth way for the crown to raise ships was to hire vessels from private persons or make arrangements with certain kingdoms, territories or city-states. For example, in 1359 the king hired eight ships from the Low Countries to transport troops to Calais for the forthcoming expedition.²⁴ Although this method of acquiring ships never contributed large numbers, the king did employ envoys to organise the hiring of such vessels. The most famous of these was Nicholinus de Flisco (Fieschi), sometimes called the cardinal of Genoa. He was employed in 1336 to obtain vessels for Edward to transport English horses 'for the king's service'.²⁵

The sixth method the king could employ to raise a fleet was to ask a group of ports to supply a specified number of ships. During the preparations for the 1322 Scottish campaign, rather than sending out officers (from the centre of government) to requisition vessels in the normal fashion Edward II negotiated directly with some port towns. The result of these discussions was that nine ports located in East Anglia were ordered to provide five ships, irrespective of the

²¹ RP, IV, p. 252

²² C47/2/25, no. 10. The evidence from this source alters the argument made by J. S. Kepler, 'Naval Impressment', p. 71, n. 9, where he suggests that Edward III made no use of such agreements.

²³ CCHR, 1341-1417, p. 3; and, see also M. Jones, 'Two Exeter ship agreements of 1303 and 1310', *MM* 52 (1967), pp. 315-19, which draws attention to two similar agreements made between the crown and local port dignitaries. *Duplici eskippamentum* is an ambiguous term but it usually refers to the practice of doubling the usual crew numbers that would, under normal circumstances, operate merchantman of the period. See p. 200 below.

²⁴ *Foedera*, III, i, p. 444.

²⁵ CPR, 1334-38, p. 321. See also R. M. Hedley, 'The administration of the navy in the reign of Edward III' (unpublished MA thesis, Manchester, 1922), pp. 10-11.

fact that these communities had already contributed two vessels to this fleet.²⁶ This process is reminiscent of the new obligations that Edward and his councillors had been developing with regard to the recruitment of land-based troops. Just as towns were required to provide a certain quota of armed men, ports were assessed to contribute a specified number of ships, manned, armed and victualled. Sometimes, as in the East Anglian example, this meant several ports pooling their resources to meet the demands of the crown.²⁷ Although raising ships in this way was not entirely novel, asking groups of towns to provide ships free of charge for nothing in return certainly seems to have been a new development.

A seventh way in which the king could assemble ships for his fleet was to use those vessels which were taken in acts of piracy or as prizes of war. For example, in 1338 William Montagu, then admiral of the fleet to the south and west of the Thames, sent four ships called the *Hulk* of Bruges, *Cristofre*, *Shavenecogge* and *Godesburgh*, all taken in war, to Scotland loaded with men for the campaign which centred around Dunbar castle.²⁸ The eighth means available to the king was for him to order specific towns to construct barges or other forms of ships for use in his wars.²⁹ These were never ordered in large numbers, however, and their ownership was also a complicated issue. For example, it is clear that some of the ships that were built as results of orders from the king did in fact remain the property of the port and the king actually shared in their upkeep.³⁰ Only in times of war would the king use these vessels, the rest of the time they were employed by the town that constructed them.

Finally, to increase the size of his fleet the king could also offer pardons to shipowners/masters, as well as to full crews, in return for providing both their ships and themselves free of wages. In this way in 1342 Edward was able to add seven vessels in this way to his fleet. The shipowners/masters and crew were expected to serve '*pur deux mois de aler sur meer en notre compaignie en le dit voyage par la temps avantdit*' and their ships were to be provided '*bien aparaille*' with '*gentz armees*'.³¹ Similarly, the king could lift the threat of confiscation provided that the owner/master served the crown in some capacity during a

²⁶ CCR, 1318–23, p. 463. The ports were Sniterle (near Norwich); Wiveton; Cleye; Salhouse; Baudreseye; Covehithe; Guston; Waleton (Walton in North Essex) and Filltustowe (Felixstowe).

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 463. For example the ports of Sniterle, Wiveton, Cleye and Salhouse were to find three ships between them. For a discussion of the recruitment of the land forces by means of this assessment, see B. C. Keeney, 'Military service in England, 1272–1327', *Speculum* 22 (October, 1947), pp. 534–49; M. Powicke, 'Edward II and military obligation', *Speculum* 31 (January, 1956), pp. 91–119; M. Prestwich, *Armies and warfare*, pp. 78, 134.

²⁸ CCR, 1337–39, p. 227.

²⁹ G. R. Cushway, 'The Lord of the sea', p. 231.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

³¹ SC1/39, nos 15, 39, 81, 157; SC1/40, nos 10–20; SC1/41, no. 66.

campaign.³² In these ways the king could usually add quite large numbers of ships to a fleet and save money.³³

The issuing of pardons for ship service in 1342 seems to be an entirely novel method of bolstering a fleet and as such is worthy of further investigation. Although it is true that Edward I had issued pardons to mariners for service in his wars, he did so on the requirement that the men in question participated in his land campaigns rather than the maritime expeditions. In addition, Edward I also offered such mariners wages for doing so.³⁴ Edward III on the other hand issued the 1342 pardons not only on the condition that the shipmasters/owners provided their service free, but also that the crews who manned the vessels they provided drew no wages. Seen in this light shipowners were expected to supply a ship fully manned and armed at their own expense. On this evidence Edward III's use of pardons seems to have been a new development.

The 1342 pardons were distributed in three different formats.³⁵ First, seven were issued to individuals.³⁶ As noted above these seven men were to serve for two months for the '*defense du royaume*'. The second category of pardon was issued directly to shipowners who were expected to send their ships to the embarkation port to arrive '*bien appareillé*', and with '*gentz armées*' aboard.³⁷ This category of pardon, because it names the ships' masters, can be compared directly with the

³² CCR, 1341–43, pp. 687, 689–90, provides evidence of ships and masters that could escape punishment for aiding the king in the Brittany campaign.

³³ In addition to the seven ships, a further thirty-three served for pardons in the Brittany transport fleets of 1342. See C. Lambert, 'An army transport fleet', p. 33.

³⁴ See R. G. Marsden, *Law and custom of the sea*, vol. 1, AD 1205–1648 (London, 1915), pp. 31–34.

³⁵ This equates with the evidence of pardons issued to land-based forces. For example, H. Lacy, 'The politics of mercy: the use of the royal pardon in fourteenth-century England,' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of York, 2005), pp. 20–21, 49–51, 61–62 and appendices 2 and 4, notes that there are three types of pardon: individual pardons, general pardons or group pardons. The ones issued to the mariners in 1342 seem to equate with individual pardons. Although Lacy suggests that military service was usually linked to the general pardon, that many of the shipmasters/owners, and indeed full crews, are mentioned individually suggests that these were individual pardons. Some of the maritime pardons make no mention of service at own costs (for example SC1/40 no. 18). However, the presumption must be that free service was required and although it has been noted that pardons were usually issued on the premise that some men could still draw wages (Lacy, p. 22) and the issuing of pardons was used as a means to bolster numbers at the muster points, the likelihood is that many recipients did serve for no pay. In addition, the fact that none of the pardoned masters appear in any of the related payrolls suggests that they were serving for two months at their own costs. Lacy also makes the suggestion that only on two occasions were pardons not recorded through the Patent Rolls in the Chancery (Lacy, p. 50). However, Lacy seems to be mistaken on this last point. See, for example, A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, pp. 144–45 who notes that pardons were recorded on the Treaty Rolls, privy seal warrants and the Scottish Rolls.

³⁶ SC1/40, nos 14–18.

³⁷ SC1/39, nos 15, 81; SC1/40, nos 10, 12, 19; SC1/41, no. 66. SC1/40 no. 12 accounts for two ships.

Wardrobe accounts and other payrolls relating to the Brittany campaign. This reveals that none of the masters named in these seven pardons are recorded as having received pay for this campaign. In effect their service was given for free in return for a pardon against their crimes. The third type of pardon was issued to the whole crew who served on board the *Margrete*, which was one of the two ships provided by John Perman.³⁸ This pardon evidence shows that Edward III cast his net widely when it came to ship requisition. Many possible means were exploited in order to raise sufficient numbers of ships and mariners for his needs.

In most cases the issue of pardons related to an act of piracy. Deliberate taking of enemy, or indeed friendly vessels, was common practice throughout this period. For instance, in 1338 a large number of East Anglian vessels attacked allied Flemish shipping.³⁹ This being so it was in 1342 that the most famous incident of piracy occurred. This act resulted in what is called here the '*Taryte* affair' and ultimately led to the issuing of the pardons noted above. What actually occurred during this episode is difficult to piece together for the main reason that the crown seems not to have known the exact details. As a consequence what we are left with are a series of orders and writs that were issued over the summer and winter of 1342 and 1343, which are not consistent and changed in response to new information delivered to the Chancery. Nevertheless, the evidence supports two interpretations. First, this incident became so 'famous' in the court proceedings that some subsequent acts of piracy were also recorded as being against the *Taryte*. In short the term became a euphemism for acts of piracy. Alternatively, '*Taryte*' might have been a descriptive word for a type of ship. In March 1340 Robert Morley was given a commission to investigate and arrest the men who had 'boarded a large ship called a *Taret* on its way to Flanders and taken away its cargo.'⁴⁰ Furthermore, in February 1362 another commission was launched to investigate the taking of merchandise worth £70,000 from a ship in Devon 'called a *Tarrit*.'⁴¹ Such evidence indicates that the compilers of these writs were describing a type of ship rather than an individual vessel.⁴²

Although it is hard to create a clear picture as to what actually happened during 1342 it is possible to give an outline of the incident. It would seem that in the spring of 1342 a large number of ships from East Anglia, Sussex, Hampshire, Devonshire and the Netherlands, perhaps as many as fifty or sixty, attacked several other Flemish vessels off the coast of the Isle of Wight that were 'laden with wine and divers other merchandise' to the value of £18,000.⁴³ The specific English towns implicated were King's Lynn, Great Yarmouth, Ipswich,

³⁸ SC1/40, no. 10.

³⁹ CPR, 1338–40, pp. 491–92.

⁴⁰ CPR, 1338–40, p. 491.

⁴¹ CPR, 1361–64, p. 209. The value of the cargo here is surely exaggerated.

⁴² See also CPR, 1340–43, p. 469, which shows that a *Taryte* may have been a type of ship rather than a name of an individual vessel.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 469, 591, 594.

Colchester, Dunwich, Sandwich, Portsmouth and Dartmouth. After capturing the *Taryte* and the others vessels they sailed them to Portsmouth, which is significant.⁴⁴ During the spring of 1342 John Watenhul had arrested 117 English ships for service in the forthcoming Breton expedition. By June of that year this had increased to 145 vessels.⁴⁵ What is more significant is that the (145) arrested ships were stationed in the Portsmouth area throughout the spring and summer of 1342. As we shall see below in the discussion on the Brittany campaign these vessels were kept in port for several months before participating in the earl of Northampton's transport fleet in August. It would seem that some of the assembled vessels undertook raiding voyages into the surrounding coastal areas to secure booty (thus offsetting some of the losses the shipowners and masters were incurring through loss of trade while they were forced to remain in the vicinity of Portsmouth) and, perhaps, such forays would provide a distraction from the monotony of sitting in Portsmouth.

So far we have seen that in the spring of 1342 a flotilla of English ships attacked several Flemish vessels off the coast of the Isle of Wight before sailing their prizes into Portsmouth harbour. Yet, the story does not end here because while at Portsmouth they seem to have become nervous about their prizes and as a result they moved the captured ships to Dartmouth and Falmouth. No doubt this owed a lot to the fact that by this time Portsmouth harbour would have been full of the king's officials who were organising the military expeditions. Initially this ploy seems to have worked for it was not until some months later that a commission was launched to 'make inquisition in the counties of Devon and Cornwall touching a ship called a *Taryte*, broken up at the port of Dartmouth, and a like ship, which put in at the port of Falmouth and into whose lands these came'.⁴⁶ It seems clear that what occurred is that after capturing the ships the booty was split with the result that the captured vessels were taken to several ports across southern England. This resulted in the confused orders that were issued throughout 1342 and 1343. Nevertheless, this incident was in some ways fortuitous for Edward III and although several people were eventually hanged for taking part in this act of piracy many more were pardoned, which provided Edward with forty ships' crews free of charge for his transport fleet of 1342.⁴⁷

Requisition Orders

The discussion above has described the methods that the king had available in order to assemble a fleet. This section examines the nature of the requisition

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ E101/22/39; E372/187, mm. 42, 45.

⁴⁶ CPR, 1340–43, p. 594.

⁴⁷ For the evidence on the hangings, see R. Ward, *The world of the medieval shipmaster*, p. 32. For the numbers of pardons issued, see Chapter 4 below.

writs that were issued before such vessels were arrested. During this period requisition orders were issued in five different formats. First, an order to arrest ships from every port in the kingdom could be issued.⁴⁸ Second, all vessels from one chosen admiralty could be requisitioned.⁴⁹ Third, ships could be ordered to appear at muster from a selected number of ports.⁵⁰ Fourth, vessels that lay within a specific geographical 'zone' within an admiralty could be arrested. For example, in August 1337 all ships over thirty tuns and more were to be arrested from the 'port of London and elsewhere on the coast of the river Thames as far as la Rewe'.⁵¹ Finally, ships could be ordered from individual shipowners. This latter point is interesting because it raises the question of whether or not requisition officials regularly targeted the same ships when they visited ports. The sources certainly suggest that in some cases the king's officials knew who owned large vessels. In 1333 William Ferriby was told to provide his ship 'which is reputed to be the best ship of Ravenserodde to come with the king against the Scots'.⁵² Are we to assume, therefore, that shipowners like William suffered disproportionately when fleets were requisitioned? This is difficult to answer conclusively for the main reason of record linkage. As we shall see below (Appendix two) we can only be sure that a ship is individual when we can link its name to that of a master *and* a port. When we do this it is possible to suggest that out of a total of 4,065 individual vessels serving in the period 1320 to 1360 only 175 did so on more than one occasion.

These figures bring out two immediate points. First, such a low number of repeat servers prove that the same ships were not constantly requisitioned. Second, the high turnover of vessels participating in naval campaigns suggests that the availability of ships was such that the king did not need to target the same vessels. Of course, if arresting officials arrived in a port and knew who owned the largest ships they were sure to attempt to arrest those first, but there was also a degree of unpredictability because officials could only arrest the ships that were at anchor when they arrived. This had implications for more than just the arresting clerks. Repeated requisition of the largest vessels would surely impact on the economy of a port. Identifying which aspects of ports' trade that would be most affected (long distance or coastal) is nevertheless a complex issue because large vessels were not only employed in long distance trade but were also used in the coastal trade involving bulk goods such as coal.⁵³ That the repeated arrest of ships did create problems, however, is evidenced by the complaints made by the burgesses of Great Yarmouth.⁵⁴ However, the data suggests that any shipowner

⁴⁸ See, for example, *Foedera*, II, ii, p. 1015; CCR 1337–39, p. 323.

⁴⁹ See, for example, CCR 1341–43, p. 59.

⁵⁰ See, for example, *Foedera*, II, ii, p. 703.

⁵¹ See, for example, CCR 1337–39, p. 189.

⁵² CCR, 1333–37, pp. 25, 99.

⁵³ See, for example, G. V. Scammell, 'English merchant shipping', pp. 327–40.

⁵⁴ *Cal. Inq. Misc.*, III, n. 14.

who had his vessels repeatedly requisitioned should be viewed as unfortunate. Thus if we examine Great Yarmouth's shipping contributions to the wars we find that this port supplied 347 ships to the maritime operations between 1320 and 1360. It is reasonable to argue that at least 200 or more of these 347 ships were individual vessels. The most ships Great Yarmouth supplied to any one fleet were sixty-one during 1338.⁵⁵ So, it would seem that Great Yarmouth contributed some 25 to 30 per cent of its shipping resources to the 1342 expedition.⁵⁶ This is not to suggest that the loss of so many ships would have had little or no impact on the economy of the port, only that caution should be used when interpreting the complaints of port communities.⁵⁷ There were situations, however, when the same ships would be rearrested after they had completed one voyage for service in another fleet. From March to May 1370 Guy Brian was at sea with a fleet of twenty-four ships drawn mainly from the south-west ports of Dartmouth, Fowey, Plymouth and Bristol. Many of these ships were rearrested for service with Walter Hewett in June and July 1370. In August they were involved in the transportation of John of Gaunt. The fact that these vessels were requisitioned on three occasions over 1370 may explain why the mariners were given 6d per week in *regard*.⁵⁸ On a cautious note, however, it is important to recognise that Devonshire and Cornish ports were closely linked to the crown through the duchy of Cornwall and because of this they received favourable grants off the crown. Such royal patronage may have influenced Devonshire and Cornish ship-owners to be more compliant in providing their ships.⁵⁹

Moreover, when considering the effects of repeat requisition on individual shipowners or port economics we must also bear in mind the complexities of ownership. It was common for several individuals to own shares in a vessel. Alternatively merchants could hire a ship from a private owner and as such only possess shares in the cargoes and not the vessel.⁶⁰ In fact in this period it was not unusual for an English ship to have anywhere up to twenty or thirty individual owners, and continental merchants are known to have held only a 1/128

⁵⁵ Norwell, pp. 379–82.

⁵⁶ See pp. 217–18 below.

⁵⁷ A. Saul, 'Great Yarmouth and the hundred years war', pp. 108–09 states that Yarmouth had roughly 100 great ships and many more smaller ones in the fourteenth century. However, Saul does not seem to have attempted to calculate how many Yarmouth ships were in fact individual vessels. In addition, it is likely that over the forty years covered by this book many of the ships recorded in 1320 had ceased to sail by 1359 so the above number should be viewed as the maximum number of individual ships that sailed out of Great Yarmouth during a forty year period, not the number of vessels they had in port at any one time.

⁵⁸ E101/30/29, mm. 2–6.

⁵⁹ See, for example, M. Kowaleski, 'The port towns of fourteenth-century Devon', in *The new maritime history of Devon*, vol. 1, ed. M. Duffy et al. (Exeter, 1992), pp. 62–72, p. 70.

⁶⁰ In Norwich, for example, merchants usually formed a group in order freight goods in the same ship. See P. Dunn, 'After the Black Death: society and economy in late fourteenth century Norwich' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of East Anglia, 2003), p. 195.

share of a ship.⁶¹ This has immediate implications in terms of the effect ship requisition had on trade. If, for example, twenty individuals owned a ship the arrest of this vessel would mean that each merchant only lost a twentieth of his potential profits. Alternatively, if that same merchant owned shares in several ships he would, of course, feel the effects of this requisition across several vessels. This being said there are many examples of ships that were owned by a single individual. For example, between 1337 and 1340 311 vessels failed to appear at the embarkation port for service in the French war. Of these five ships were owned by the master that operated them, two masters owned half the ships they commanded, one vessel had two owners while eighty-nine (29%) were owned by one individual.⁶² Finally, in 1342 the owners of fifty-eight ships were awarded compensation by the crown for the damage their vessels incurred while in the king's service.⁶³ Of these fifty-eight vessels thirty-nine (67%) were owned by one individual. Because the 1342 (E101/24/9 (b)) document records all those who owned shares in each damaged ship, we can be certain that two-thirds of the vessels in this record were owned by one individual. Another document of interest records the owners of sixty-four ships that were involved in acts of piracy in 1338.⁶⁴ Of these sixty-four vessels fifty-three (83%) were owned by one individual. Taken together between 1337 and 1342 of a visible 217 (there are 431 individual vessels recorded on these three documents but some entries fail to record the owners' names) ships for which we have the names of the owners recorded 181 (83%) were owned by just one person.⁶⁵ It may be that Exchequer payrolls or Chancery rolls do not record all the owners of a ship and simply reveal the principal owner. This being said there will be some modicum of accuracy because during the requisition process hundreds of documents would have been produced. Unfortunately we are only left with the final account that was submitted to the Exchequer. It is likely that these hundreds of subsidiary docu-

⁶¹ On English ownership, see R. Ward, *The world of the medieval shipmaster*, pp. 49–50. On continental share ownership, see H. Brand, 'Roundtable reviews of Robin Ward, *The World of the Medieval Shipmaster*', *International Journal of Maritime History* 21, no. 2 (2009), pp. 306–13.

⁶² C47/2/30. 214 entries list only the master and not the owner. The word *seignor* is usually placed after the person who owns the ship, even if this is the master. Consequently when this word is not recorded it is presumed that the clerk did not know who the owner was. The two ships that were part owned by their masters were the *Plente* of Blackeneye commanded (and part owned) by Thomas Stoyne, the second owner being Thomas Blanford; the *Mariote* of Blackeneye commanded (and part owned) by John Maleman, the second owner being Adam Brime. The vessel owned by two individuals (none being the master) was the *Nicholas* of Blackeneye, the owners were Adam and William Hekere. The *Godyer* of King's Lynn was owned by a lady called Margaret Colbothe. One vessel was owned by the earl of Derby and another was owned by Thomas Ughtred (both from Hull), which shows nobles were ship owners.

⁶³ E101/24/9 (a) and E101/24/9 (b).

⁶⁴ CPR, 1338–40, pp. 491–92.

⁶⁵ If we include all the 431 ships 42% of ships would still be owned by one individual.

ments contained the names of all the owners.⁶⁶ The crown, of course, would only be interested in collecting any outstanding debts from the principal owners. Presumably the largest shareholders in the vessel would then have to approach their partners in order to receive compensation from them. This way the crown saved valuable time by not having to trace dozens of individuals.

As such the evidence listed in these documents argues that single ownership was not uncommon in the mid fourteenth century. Interestingly, the compensation source from 1342 also reveals that when several individuals possessed one ship the owners did not necessarily live in the same port. For example, the *Jonette* of Winchelsea was owned by five men of whom only two resided in Winchelsea.⁶⁷ As such the loss of revenue that resulted in this ship being arrested for service was actually spread over more than one port. Of course, the people who would most suffer with regard to ship requisition are those shipmasters who also owned the vessels they commanded. Although they would receive 6d per day in wages it is uncertain if this would have been enough to cover the losses they would incur because they could not hire out their ship.

We can examine this further. In 1338 Alexander Witton of Hull, master of the *Trinite*, served for twenty-seven days and as such he would have received just over 13s in wages.⁶⁸ This is a complex calculation to attempt and is given here only as a means of creating an impression as to what some of the losses and costs may have been. In this period it was normal for shipowners to charge roughly 20s a tun for freightage.⁶⁹ If we were to say that most trading voyages lasted anywhere up to three months we can examine how much a ship, for which we have tunnage figures, would earn under normal trading circumstances and analyse how requisition into the king's service may have affected this. It is important to note that in addition to the wages of the crew and freightage costs there would also be local port charges to pay for. The *Blithe* of Weymouth, a ship of 120 tuns, served in the St Sardos expedition for a total of thirteen weeks.⁷⁰ If this vessel had been hired for a private trading venture the freightage charge would have been in the region of £120, whereas in 1324 the wages of one master, one constable and twenty-four mariners came to just under £29. The master's wage alone would have been £2 3s 6d. If the master was the owner of this ship he would have lost roughly £110–£115 while he was kept in the king's service. Of course the crew would still

⁶⁶ See discussion below entitled 'Process of Requisition', for more information on the administrative process.

⁶⁷ The owners of the *Jonette* were Charles de Winchelsea who was also the master, William Bydere of London, another William of London (the surname name is missing on the MS) John Vigeron of Looe and John Bartelot of Winchelsea. This was not the only such vessel that was owned by men from different ports. For example, the *Godyer* of Hull was owned by John Seward of Hull and John Colyer of Nottingham, see E101/24/9 (b), nos 17 and 37.

⁶⁸ Norwell, p. 375.

⁶⁹ N. A. M. Rodger, *Safeguard of the sea*, p. 125.

⁷⁰ BL, Add 7967, fol. 94r.

require payment so the owners of this vessel would have lost some £80–£90 in potential freightage while this vessel was under arrest.⁷¹ These figures suggest that shipowners were losing a considerable amount of money when their vessels were arrested.⁷² Nevertheless, the evidence is uneven and although many vessels were owned by one person it is also likely that many others had multiple owners. In addition, repeat service amongst shipmasters was not common during this period and after 1335, apart from the years when large fleets were raised (for example only eight large fleets were raised between 1335 and 1359), there were lengthy periods when large armadas were not requisitioned. As such the requisitioning of merchant ships may not have had such a devastating effect on an individual merchant's wealth or indeed in trade in general. Moreover, as we shall see in Chapter 4 the English crown carefully managed and exploited the kingdom's maritime resources during this period for several reasons. One of these was that the king relied on the wool and wine trades for taxation that in turn financed the war. However, if, as can be argued, English shipowners favoured re-export and coastal trade, with the result that a majority of export trade was carried in foreign hulls, the impact on taxable exported goods such as wool would not be affected as greatly when English ships were requisitioned.⁷³

That certain vessels served more than once, however, cannot be doubted and some individual owners were rather unlucky in this regard. For example, between 1338 and 1342 the owner – or owners – of the vessel *Sefray* from Gosforth commanded by Ralph Gardiner was unfortunate to have this ship requisitioned on four consecutive occasions. Indeed, in 1342 the *Sefray* served twice when in August it was part of the flotilla that transported the earl of Northampton to Brittany before being arrested on its return to participate in the king's October transport armada.⁷⁴ This ship therefore lost more or less a full years trading. Similarly the *Leonard* of Hull, commanded by William Broun, was arrested on four occasions between 1334 and 1339.⁷⁵ The *George* of Sidmouth, commanded by John Hake, was arrested on five separate occasions in the period 1325–42.⁷⁶ Sometimes repeated arrest prompted owners to refuse to allow their ship to appear at muster points. A case in point was the *Nicholas* of Hull, commanded

⁷¹ In the 1380s owners would be paid between 3s 4d and 2s per tun for every three months from the ships appearance at the port of embarkation. Even so this would have only compensated them for one tenth of their losses, see N. A. M. Rodger, *Safeguard of the sea*, p. 125.

⁷² Not all this money was profit because the owners would have to pay for any 'overheads'.

⁷³ For a discussion on this, see Chapter 4, pp. 174–83 below. For the argument that foreign ships dominated the export trade, see D. Burwash, *English Merchant Shipping*, pp. 145–48; P. Dunn, 'After the Black Death', p. 200.

⁷⁴ E36/204, p. 238; CCR, 1343–46, pp. 129–32.

⁷⁵ BL, Cotton MS, Nero C.VIII, fol. 266r; E101/19/6, mm. 1, 2, 2d.

⁷⁶ E101/17/3, m. 6b; E101/17/24, m. 4d; E101/19/38, m. 3; E101/19/39, m. 2; CCR, 1343–46, pp. 129–32.

by William Ferriby. The *Nicholas* was requisitioned in 1333 and 1335 for service in the Scottish wars.⁷⁷ However, in 1337 when the same vessel was arrested for the planned continental expedition of that year its owner(s) did not allow the ship to appear at the muster point.⁷⁸ Consequently we should not view shipowners as submissive partners in the mobilisation of fleets. It is interesting to note, however, that it was rare for shipowners to resist while the clerks and sergeant-at-arms were actually in port, and in the case of the *Nicholas* the crew had taken their wages some months before the vessel was expected to appear at muster. It could be that at the time of the muster the ship was still completing its trading voyages, and that its failure to appear was not a deliberate action.

We have seen, then, that there were five different variations in requisition orders. Yet, within these orders there was also two 'sub' categories. These usually stated that only ships of a certain size (as expressed by tunnage) were to be arrested. For example, in 1326 all ships over fifty tuns were to be requisitioned whilst those vessels under fifty tuns were 'not to go out for the purposes of fishing or another business.'⁷⁹ The second type of order that was issued specified no tonnages at all and it is to be presumed that admirals were to collect any ships they could locate. This latter policy could lead to complications. For example, in 1338 when Walter Mauny was admiral of the north the king was petitioned by four shipowners who said that Mauny had arrested their ships which consisted of 'two boats of Robert Ryghtwys and John Ryghtwys called "pykers" in the port of Holm, and two little ships of Martin son of Peter and Adam Scot, which vessels are not suited for the king's passage, not permitting them to fish in these boats.'⁸⁰ Clearly Mauny had collected every available ship he could during this period. Consequently, orders that specified no tunnage could create more problems than they solved as unsuitable vessels were arrested at considerable time and cost. In other words officials failed on occasions to use necessary discretion.

Regardless of their precise format the responsibility for arresting ships lay with the individuals who received these orders. Who were these men and did their collective experience encourage the development of a sophisticated system of ship requisition? It will be argued here that there was great continuity in the administrative personnel that served under Edward II and Edward III, and that this continuity was largely responsible for the success of maritime mobilisation in the period 1324–50. Recognition of continuity in bureaucratic personnel is not new, and it has been remarked before that even though there were three changes of government between the years 1327 and 1333, apart from the associates closest to the failed regimes of Edward II and Roger Mortimer, the administra-

⁷⁷ E101/18/36, m. 2; *Foedera*, II, ii, p. 912.

⁷⁸ C47/2/30, m. 1. This was probably the same William Ferriby who was reputed to have the best ship in Ravenserodde and who was specifically targeted in the 1333 expedition. Perhaps this explains why he failed to appear in 1337. See p. 20 above.

⁷⁹ CPR, 1324–27, p. 308.

⁸⁰ CCR, 1337–39, p. 351.

tive personnel in the Chancery and the Exchequer remained largely unchanged.⁸¹ For example, the keeper of the Wardrobe in 1320, Roger Northburgh, was still involved in the administration of Edward III in 1341, and he had been at various times keeper of the Wardrobe, keeper of the privy seal and great seal, chancellor and treasurer of the Exchequer.⁸² Nicholas Huggate was another figure of continuity who served both Edward II and Edward III, and who had been employed in the royal administration from 1314.⁸³ More importantly, however, was the fact that he had been the organiser of the St Sardos expedition of 1324, a role that required the organising of continental transport fleets. Another experienced administrator who served both Edward II and Edward III was Richard Bury who was employed on various secret missions throughout his career.⁸⁴ Richard Ferriby was another high-ranking official who began his career serving Archbishop Melton in the reign of Edward II, before becoming a Wardrobe clerk for the same king. Following this he was appointed a clerk of the privy seal before finally becoming keeper of the Wardrobe under Edward III.⁸⁵ Importantly these men, especially Northburgh, Huggate and Ferriby, had organised large military and naval expeditions to both Scotland and France before Edward III came to the throne. As such when Edward III wanted to raise large supply and transport fleets in the 1330s and 1340s he could call upon the service of able and experienced bureaucrats.

The four administrators described above are what we could call 'heavyweights' and these men were at the highest level of government in the period from 1320 to the mid-1340s. However, under such men there also existed an experienced cadre of clerical officials whose collective experiences of raising fleets aided Edward III when he began to place huge demands on the merchant fleet in the 1330s and 1340s. Two examples of such officials, one working in the northern admiralty and one in the southern admiralty, will show how such expertise was accumulated over long careers. Indeed, we shall see that such men in fact became specialists in ship requisition. James Kingston was a clerk who operated solely under the jurisdiction of the northern admiral. His career, as documented in the records, begins in 1324 when as a petty clerk of the Chancery he issued a petition requesting that the king pay him 'for the cost and troubles he has incurred in suing for the recovery of the prises of wine.'⁸⁶ In the later 1320s he seems to have taken on some legal work for the Abbot of Fecamp who had interests in East Yorkshire.⁸⁷

⁸¹ Tout, *Chapters*, III, pp. 5–7, 35–36.

⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 17, 18, 131–33.

⁸³ Tout, *Chapters*, III, pp. 6, 71–72; Tout, *Chapters*, IV, pp. 74–76.

⁸⁴ On Bury's career, see M. Ormrod, 'The king's secrets: Richard Bury and Edward III', in *War, government and the aristocracy in the British Isles, c. 1150–1500: essays in honour of Michael Prestwich*, ed. C. Given-Wilson, A. Kettle and L. Scales (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 163–78.

⁸⁵ Tout, *Chapters*, II, p. 273; Tout, *Chapters*, III, p. 215; Tout, *Chapters*, IV, p. 79.

⁸⁶ SC8/270/13478.

⁸⁷ SC8/258/12890 (b).

However, it was in 1327 that Kingston was appointed to the role that was to form a large part of his career when he was ordered to gather victuals for Queen Isabella's Scottish campaign. Three years after the failed Weardale expedition Kingston was appointed to survey the lands of Roger Mortimer in the aftermath of his execution.⁸⁸ In 1333 Kingston was appointed to organise victuals for forthcoming siege of Berwick. In the following year he was appointed to arrest ships in his home town of Hull, and in 1335 his services were called upon again when he was ordered to arrest ships from all the ports in the northern admiralty. In 1335, therefore, Kingston's responsibilities had clearly increased and he was transferred from the role of victual collector to the more complicated task of ship requisition. In 1336 he was again appointed to arrest ships from the northern admiralty and in 1337 he organised the requisitioning of ships from the north country ports for the planned Scottish expedition of that year. By 1341 Kingston's career became cemented, a fact borne out by the description of him as a 'king's clerk' in the existing documentation after this date. In 1344, and in an obvious act of religious compassion, Kingston remembered those less fortunate than himself in his home town of Hull and he built a house called 'God's House' for the care of thirteen 'poor and infirm persons and children'.⁸⁹

Perhaps more influential and impressive than Kingston was the career of John Watenhul of Devon. Watenhul's involvement in the organisation of war spanned the regimes of Edward II, Isabella and Mortimer and Edward III. He first appears in 1325 when he received letters of protection to accompany Hugh Courtney to Gascony.⁹⁰ After this he was appointed one of the executors of the will of Aymer de Valence, because in 1325 his name is attached to a petition asking for a manor taken from Valence by the earl of Hereford to be returned to the estate of the Pembroke earls.⁹¹ At this stage in his career Watenhul was clearly a legal specialist for in 1327 he was appointed attorney on behalf of John Lestraunge to fight his case in relation to the lands of John Giffard to which Lestraunge claimed he had right of inheritance.⁹² Mortimer's demise does not seem to have affected his career, and by the mid 1330s Watenhul had impressed Edward III, his new master, and had risen through the ranks to become what Wilkinson describes as a 'first grade clerk'.⁹³ In 1336 Watenhul was first appointed

⁸⁸ CPR, 1330–34, p. 57.

⁸⁹ On Kingston's career, see *Rot. Scot.* I, pp. 207, 279, 317, 379, 403, 418, 477; CCR, 1341–43, p. 295; CPR, 1343–45, p. 418. Kingston's father was Adam Helleward. Kingston died in 1355. See C135/126/11. It is possible that Walter Helleward of Hull was also related to James Kingston. Walter was a shipowner who resided in the port of Hull, see CPR, 1321–24, p. 86. If so Kingston certainly came from a maritime background.

⁹⁰ *Foedera*, II, I, p. 605.

⁹¹ SC8/77/3814.

⁹² CCR, 1327–30, p. 109.

⁹³ CCR, 1330–33, p. 65; B. Wilkinson, *The chancery under Edward III* (Manchester, 1929), p. 80.

to requisition ships and collect victuals and arms for mariners, duties which came to dominate his career over the next decades. His involvement spanned the Scottish wars of the mid 1330s through to Edward III's first expeditions to France in 1338–40, the Brittany campaign of 1342 and the momentous Crécy expedition of 1346. In 1340 and 1341 he was also involved in organising ships for some 'secret business' conducted by the earl of Warwick and for this purpose he requisitioned ships from the area around the coast of Suffolk and Essex.⁹⁴ His most intense involvement in fleet raising duties occurred in 1342–43 during the preparations for the Brittany campaign and the subsequent investigation into the desertion of hundreds of shipmasters from Brest and Vannes in October and November 1342. Consequently, Watenhul accumulated vast experience at arresting small groups of ships and much larger fleets. Although he was closely connected to maritime affairs in Devon, which led to him forming a close relationship with the influential Devonshire shipowner/master William Bacoun, he was also active in south-eastern counties and had in 1336 been on commission to investigate certain issues regarding the Cinque Ports.⁹⁵

Although clerical officers played a large role in the requisition process there were also other officials such as sheriffs involved. Indeed, the contribution of sheriffs should not be underestimated. In some cases before the clerks went to the ports the sheriff provided these administrators with detailed information on the availability of shipping. For example, in 1340 Robert de Causton, sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk, provided the crown with a list of shipowners from those counties and how many ships they could contribute to a fleet. This document contains the names of 155 shipowners who between them could supply 177 vessels.⁹⁶ Although sheriffs performed a role in fleet raising it is sometimes difficult to determine what part they played in the actual process of arrest. Besides providing information, like Causton, we also know that in the preparations for the Sluys fleet the sheriffs of the maritime counties participated in arresting ships.⁹⁷ However, whether they conducted the day-to-day business of visiting ports and recording the names of the arresting ships is uncertain. Most sheriffs at this time would have been illiterate and would have relied on clerks to record the process and prepare returns for the Exchequer. As such we should perhaps view the sheriff as a type of project manager, an intermediary between the admiral and the clerical officials. Sheriff's would have provided the 'on the

⁹⁴ E101/22/39.

⁹⁵ On Watenhull's career, see E101/19/38/; E101/19/39; E101/21/7; E101/22/39/; E101/390/12 fol. 6v; E358/2, mm. 11d, 17; E43/529; E358/4, mm. 1, 11d; E156/28/8; *Rot. Scot.* I, pp. 476, 477; *CCR*, 1327–30, p. 109; *CCR*, 1333–37, pp. 620, 623, 641, 730; *CCR* 1341–43, pp. 127, 356, 688, 690; *CPR*, 1334–38, p. 391; *CPR* 1345–48, p. 284; *CPR* 1345–48, pp. 92, 284. On his involvement with Bacoun, see *CCR* 1341–43, pp. 59, 128. Bacoun was an influential Devonshire shipowner who owned several ships, for example, see E101/24/9 (b).

⁹⁶ C47/2/32, mm. 1–4.

⁹⁷ E101/398/8, m. 6.

ground' authority for the clerks to requisition ships, and it would probably have been the sheriffs to whom the clerks reported back.

In carrying out the day-to-day work of ship requisition clerks also worked under the auspices of the admirals. This raises the important question of defining the role the admiral played in raising fleets. It is likely that the admirals headed the requisitioning process whilst playing a limited role in the routine work of visiting ports. They provided signed and sealed arrest warrants to the clerks so they had authority to requisition ships, and they probably provided some form of armed escort to accompany the clerks in their duties.⁹⁸ It is important to stress, however, that the admiral represented an authority figure who could ensure that pressure was brought to bear on shipowners who were reluctant to have their vessels arrested. In short, it is probable that the admirals provided the authority and support for the clerks who carried out the actual arrest of ships. Indeed, it was unlikely that admirals would concern themselves with the bureaucratic processes that clerks such as John de Percebrigg undertook in 1335, when he spent over two months visiting thirteen ports in order to requisition ships.⁹⁹ More broadly we know that the admiral's direct involvement in maritime affairs increased during the fourteenth century and that the admiral's court extended its areas of influence. This legal aspect of the admiral's role was in many ways analogous to the constables and marshals in the army, and as such issues of misbehaviour at sea dominated the admirals' business in these hearings.¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless, the influence of the admiralty declined in the latter part of the fourteenth century with an increasing number of cases being dealt with by local port courts and the Chancery. It may be that the sharp rise in the legal authority of the admiral in the first half of the fourteenth century was directly related to the increased naval effort in the wars of the three Edwards.¹⁰¹ Constant requisitioning of merchant vessels was bound to increase problems and perhaps, because of the war effort, the duties of the admirals sharply increased during the years of 1324 to 1350. This being said the role of the admiral in the requisition process was probably more 'hands off' than their duties in the courts.

The accumulation of expertise implicit in the various careers and roles discussed above allowed Edward III to raise huge fleets in the 1330s and 1340s; and as such the success of Edward III's naval policy during these years ulti-

⁹⁸ The king could and did sometimes bypass the admirals and issue writs directly to the clerks. As such the admiral's role may have been more legal and authoritative rather than a person involved in the day to day business of naval impressments, see G. R. Cushway, 'The lord of the sea', p. 154.

⁹⁹ E101/19/14.

¹⁰⁰ See, R. Ward, *The world of the medieval shipmaster*, Chapter 2.

¹⁰¹ T. J. Runyan, 'The rolls of Oleron and the admiralty court in fourteenth century England', *The American Journal of Legal History*, 19, no. 2 (April, 1975), pp. 95–111, also makes the point that the court may have arisen due to the increased naval activity in the mid-fourteenth century.

mately rested on the skills of these officials. Rather than having the enormous expense of maintaining a standing navy, a task that was beyond the capabilities of a fourteenth-century government, what the English kings opted for was the next best thing, which was a cadre of skilled officials with the collective expertise to raise fleets from private resources.¹⁰² Indeed, although it has been suggested by historians looking back from the vantage point of the Tudor period that in the fourteenth century naval organisation was minimal, it is important to remember that the crown had a large and skilled bureaucratic staff at its disposal.¹⁰³ By the 1340s this was fully capable of organising complex naval logistical operations, involving at the extreme fleets of over 700 ships. The evolution of efficient and sophisticated fleet-raising methods by the 1330s and the 1340s invites us to consider the argument that in the late 1360s and early 1370s this system ceased to function as well as it had done.¹⁰⁴ Continuity of personnel provides at least a partial explanation.

We may begin with the highest level of administrators in period of the late 1350s to the early 1370s. It is true that during this time there was an element of stability within the Wardrobe. Nevertheless, this apparent continuity of staff obscures some important details. For example, the campaign of 1359 was beset by administrative difficulties owing to the fact that the keeper of the Wardrobe at the outset of the campaign, Henry Walton, fell ill during his term of office. The result of this was that his successor, William Farley, took up his post during the actual preparations for the campaign. Consequently Farley's accounts were not audited until some years after 1359.¹⁰⁵ Moreover, Farley did not remain in post for long. In 1361 he resigned his office and was subsequently appointed constable of Bordeaux. Indeed, in the period 1359–74 six different incumbents held the post of keeper of the Wardrobe.¹⁰⁶ This does not mean that they were not unfamiliar with the office. Thomas Brantigham (keeper from 1369–74), for example, had

¹⁰² Other clerks who were active in the Scottish wars of Edward II and Edward III, and the later French wars of the 1330s and 1340s were Nicholas Acton and Ambrose Newburgh. On their careers, see *CPR*, 1313–17, pp. 299, 405; *CPR*, 1317–21, pp. 44, 50, 57, 273, 303, 517; *CPR*, 1321–24, pp. 179, 242, 413; *CPR*, 1327–30, pp. 98, 469; *CPR*, 1330–34, p. 321. *Rot. Scot.* I, pp. 260, 364, 379, 403; *EIOI* 8/3.

¹⁰³ See, for example, D. Loades, *England's maritime empire: seapower, commerce and policy, 1490–1690* (Edinburgh, 2000), pp. 3–7, in which he argues that medieval naval infrastructure was minimal.

¹⁰⁴ See, for example, J. Sumption, *Divided houses: the hundred years war III* (London, 2009). Sumption makes the point throughout his book that in the 1370s English maritime organisation suffered from inconsistencies and failed in many regards to provide a sufficient number of ships for the transportation of armies.

¹⁰⁵ See Tout, *Chapters*, III, pp. 225–33, 451; Tout, *Chapters*, IV, pp. 143–47, 153, 348; Tout, *Chapters*, VI, pp. 136–37; T. F. Tout, 'The chief officers of the king's wardrobe down to 1399', *EHR* 95 (1909), pp. 496–505.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

been paymaster and treasurer of the army in 1359.¹⁰⁷ Nevertheless, there was not the same level of cohesion of experiences that was maintained in the period 1338 to 1347.

Further down the hierarchy, amongst those who carried out the crucial work of arrest, there is greater discontinuity between the intensive mid-century phase of activity and the efforts of Edward III's twilight years. The officials responsible for arresting ships in 1359 were Robert Crull, Thomas Durant, Thomas Dautre, Walter Harewell, Michael Grendon, Richard Cotenale, William atte Wode, John Ellerton and John Mayn.¹⁰⁸ Of these men four had previous experience at arresting ships. However, apart from Walter Harewell, this experience was limited to requisitioning only single ships or small groups of vessels.¹⁰⁹ Others admittedly had direct military experience. For example, John Ellerton led a retinue to France in 1359 and William atte Wode served in the retinue of John Beauchamp in the Reims expedition.¹¹⁰ In addition Thomas Durant had organised a virtual operation for the Black Prince in 1357.¹¹¹ None of these men were unfamiliar with the organisation of war, but only three of the 1359 'team' were involved in ship requisition in the period 1369–77 and of these only Crull played any significant role.¹¹² One other important point to note is that the appointment of men like Ellerton, Dautre, Grendon, Mayn and Durant to arrest ships appears to have been a marked departure from the previous methods employed to assemble fleets. All these men were in fact sergeants-at-arms.¹¹³ In the earlier period it was clerks, supported by sergeants-at-arms, who organised fleets. The removal of clerical officials from the logistical operations of 1359 seems to have had an adverse effect on the efficiency of ship requisition. This is not to say that clerks did not continue to play a role in fleet raising in the 1370s. Where the change seems to have occurred, however, is in the relative experience of these

¹⁰⁷ Tout, *Chapters*, III, p. 225.

¹⁰⁸ *Foedera*, III, i, pp. 427–28.

¹⁰⁹ The men were Thomas Dautre, Thomas Durant, Walter Harewell and John Ellerton. Harewell had been involved in the requisition process for the 1342 Brittany campaign and the 1346 Crécy campaign. Dautre had a colourful career and seems closely connected to John Beauchamp and as such he was stationed at Calais during the mid 1350s. He was also involved in several territorial disputes in Yorkshire in the early 1370s. He had on one occasion arranged for supplies to be freighted from Newcastle to Calais, so he was not unfamiliar with merchants. Further, he arranged for the shipment of horses over to Calais to give as a gift to the Lord of Milan. See SC8/41/2049; E43/209; E101/396/3; E101/390/12; E156/28/8; CPR, 1354–58, pp. 67, 225, 395, 450, 454, 500–01; CCR, 1354–60, p. 257.

¹¹⁰ CPR, 1358–61, pp. 388, 394.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² The others were Walter Harewell and Thomas Dautre who arrested ships in the 1370s. Robert Crull was clerk of the king's ships throughout this period and organised the maritime dimension of the campaign to reinforce the Black Prince in 1367. See *Foedera*, III, ii, pp. 871, 885; CPR, 1370–74, p. 494; Tout, *Chapters*, IV, p. 348.

¹¹³ CPR, 1354–58, pp. 67, 94, 225, 322, 395, 444, 450, 454; CPR, 1358–61, pp. 133, 272.

men in the organisation of maritime operations. None of the 1370s officials (apart from those responsible for the king's ships) had sustained and continuous involvement in ship requisition comparable to the officials of the 1330s and 1340s. Much of this arose because of the Treaty of Brétigny in 1360, since when, for almost a decade, large fleets were not raised.¹¹⁴ This meant that the clerks who took office in the early 1360s were ten years into their careers when hostilities with France began again in the early 1370s, as such they lacked the opportunities to build up substantial experiences of fleet raising.

This point can be illustrated by looking back at the careers of John Watenhul and James Kingston. Not only were these men involved in ship requisition over a sustained period, but these officials were also from maritime towns or counties. Kingston was from Hull and very likely familiar with the business of shipping. Watenhul was from the important maritime county of Devon and formed close associations with Devonshire shipowners. The contrast between this representative pair and the sergeants-at-arms who requisitioned vessels in 1359 is startling. These officials had little or no connection to the sea. Rather they were part of the landed military elite. This is not a novel statement and it has been remarked before that earlier in Edward III's reign clerical officials, rather than members of the gentry, fulfilled the most important role in fleet impressments.¹¹⁵ However, the comparison between those involved in the earlier decades of the 1330s and 1340s with those of the later period certainly suggests that a change took place during and after 1359. The differing experiences of fleet raising before and after 1359 lends weight to the importance of the officials who organised these logistical operations.

In broad terms we have described a three-tier organisational system that operated in various forms. At the top of this pyramid sat the admirals who reacted to requisition orders issued from the centre of government. At this point the admiral either appointed clerks to arrest ships or asked the sheriff to organise the process. In the latter case the sheriff would then have to appoint the clerical officials himself. Alternatively the crown could go straight to the sheriff and side-step the admiral, although it must be stressed that only in 1340 does this seem to have been the case. This may have been done because of the urgent need for ships in preparation for the Sluys campaign, as such valuable time was saved by authorising the sheriffs to arrest ships without waiting for the admiral to send out the same orders. Alternatively the crown could appoint clerks direct from the Chancery or Exchequer to arrest vessels without the need to involve either the sheriff or the admiral. This being said at some stage in the requisition procedure, particularly when large fleets were organised, it is likely that all three of

¹¹⁴ Fleets to Gascony were still organised but these were not of the same magnitude as those of the 1340s and 1350s.

¹¹⁵ G. R. Cushway, 'The lord of the sea', p. 157 and R. A. Kaner, 'The management of the mobilisation of English armies'; both comment on the role played by clerks in the requisition process.

the above officers of the crown were involved. Thus each official had a specific role and responsibilities and it was an efficient way of managing the complex preparations of fleet organisation.

Process of Requisition

The foregoing analysis has shown the types of requisition orders that were issued, what kind of ships were arrested in preparation for an expedition and how the continuity in administrative personnel from the reign of Edward II to Edward III created a cadre of experienced officials that allowed English military ventures to the continent to increase in scale and scope. We now examine the inner workings of the arrest procedure. The general outline of the requisitioning process is easy to reconstruct. Before a campaign was due to begin an order to arrest shipping would be sent out from the king.¹¹⁶ After receiving these initial orders, teams of clerks, usually accompanied by sergeants-at-arms, would go to selected ports and arrest merchant vessels.¹¹⁷ Normally, each team would be given a prescribed geographical area to cover. For example, before the 1335 Scottish campaign John de Briggewater was appointed to arrest ships in Dartmouth, while John de Percebrigg operated in the area to the west of the Thames.¹¹⁸ By examining Percebrigg's account we can see that he spent from 6 January to 4 March 1335 visiting thirteen ports, usually staying at each one for two days, for which he claimed £14 17s in expenses.¹¹⁹ The time that he stayed at each port is important. It shows that ships were not invariably arrested and forced to remain in port until the departure of the fleet; though this did happen on occasion, as in 1342 and 1386, it was the exception rather than the rule.¹²⁰ More commonly

¹¹⁶ For example, CCR, 1333–37, pp. 397–98, and *Rot. Scot.* I, pp. 505–06, 309, 311–12.

¹¹⁷ On the role of the sergeants in this process, see R. Partington, 'Edward III's enforcers: the king's sergeants-at-arms in the localities', in *The age of Edward III*, ed. J. Bothwell (York, 2000), pp. 89–106 especially p. 97. But also, see R. M. Hedley, 'The administration of the navy in the reign of Edward III', pp. 60–62.

¹¹⁸ John de Briggewater was a Chancery clerk, comptroller of wool in Somerset and Dorset and keeper of the hospital of St Mary Magdalene outside Southampton and as such was closely connected to maritime counties; see SC8/306/15270; SC8/196/9754; CPR, 1338–40, p. 360.

¹¹⁹ E101/19/4.

¹²⁰ On the Brittany campaign and its problems, see C. L. Lambert, 'An army transport fleet', and Chapter 4 below. On 1386, see E101/40/12. That ships were not forced to stay in port is also evidenced by the list of over 300 ships that refused to serve in the period 1337–40. Given that these ships were allowed to leave port and did not return to the mustering port one must presume that they were free to leave the port once they had been requisitioned. For the list of over 300 vessels, see C47/2/30. If, for example, the land forces were slow to muster, ships could be held up at the port of disembarkation for some time but this was in many respects not the fault of the maritime requisition procedure. Indeed, the maritime component was but one part of a larger logistical operation.

ships were arrested, details of the master and owner were recorded, the crew issued with an advance on their wages and the vessel allowed to complete its business. This was a system built on trust. Its success relied on the fact that some weeks, or even months later, the ships would appear at their ports of embarkation to perform their duty. That they did so regularly and in such large numbers says something about the power of the crown during this period. In many cases clerks or admirals would also have the power to 'elect' mariners to serve on the arrested ships. In 1336 Geoffrey de Say was given powers to impress seamen, as was Thomas Ughtred in the same year.¹²¹ Once arrested the ships were ordered to arrive at the port of embarkation on a specified date to load up with men, horses and equipment, and after loading the ships transported their cargoes to the theatre of war, disembarked, returned to their home ports and were finally paid off and recorded in a payroll.

This description of ship requisition is the accepted version of the procedure, and as was noted this has been described as a 'simple' operation.¹²² Yet this brief description of the requisition process ignores the immense organisational skill required to fulfil the crown's demands.¹²³ For instance, at Portsmouth in October 1342 there were 487 ships waiting to transport the king and his army to Brittany and in 1346 there are likely to have been over 700 waiting for the Crécy army.¹²⁴ The sheer size of these fleets and the difficulties of locating individual ships must have created problems for the clerks. Consequently, there must have been a system in operation that allowed requisition officials to accurately record the complete service of the ships. Beyond the bureaucratic process employed by the clerks before a fleet could be raised the crown needed an idea as to the current availability of shipping. To this end, before the administrative phase began a series of consultations were organised between crown officials and local port men, county jurymen and local councils. In addition, sheriffs could undertake a 'census' to discover the availability of ships, as Robert Causton did in 1340.¹²⁵

Once these consultations were concluded the bureaucratic stage of the requisition process could be started. The procedure would have involved three distinct phases with each phase being used to simplify the documentation and make it easier for the clerks to compile those tidy final accounts. First, the ships were arrested in their home ports, or the port they were visiting, and it was here that the first record of their names would have been taken. The second phase of the process occurred when the ships arrived at the port of embarkation. At this stage a second muster would take place which involved ticking off from the first

¹²¹ *Rot. Scot.* I, pp. 404, 416.

¹²² See, for example, C. Allmand, *The hundred years war*, p. 88.

¹²³ One recent commentator on the impressments of merchant ships has described the system as 'a relatively straightforward procedure; it was simple and efficient'. See P. Reid, *By fire and sword: the rise and fall of English supremacy at arms, 1314–1485* (London, 2007), p. 79.

¹²⁴ C. Lambert, 'An army transport fleet', p. 83, and Chapter 3 below.

¹²⁵ See, for example, G. R. Cushway, 'Lord of the sea', pp. 158–59.

document the names of the masters who had appeared. This would have been necessary as for a variety of reasons not all the ships arrested would make it to the muster.¹²⁶ Similarly, another check would take place at the disembarkation point. At this stage a new document would be compiled in the form of a list of ships that had honoured their arrest orders. The second phase would therefore provide the start and completion dates of a particular ship's service. The last phase of the procedure involved transferring the information gathered during the two previous stages, now conveniently in one long ship list, into the final payrolls with the service dates and pay details of the ships' crew. Only when the third stage was completed could the clerks submit the final documentation to the Exchequer. The task now is to chart this process, using surviving documents, thereby linking these three distinct phases together.

By examining an Exchequer account of unknown date we can see the first of the three requisition stages.¹²⁷ The date of the document is problematic because the description of who compiled the account and when they did so is largely missing.¹²⁸ Although an exact date is difficult to establish, that is less important than the fact that it corresponds well to the first of the three stages outlined above. For example, it contains the name of the port in which the arrest took place, the name of the ship, and crucially, its tunnage. This last point is important because the initial arrest order usually stipulated that ships of only forty tuns

¹²⁶ For example, such a problem blighted Sir Walter de Mauny on two occasions. During the period 1337–40, 311 ships refused to go on the king's service under Walter, and later, during the preparations for the 1342 Brittany campaign, his passage was also delayed because some of the ships which were part of his transport fleet failed to appear at the port of embarkation. See C47/2/30, mm.1–2 and 1d, 2d. For the Brittany fleet, see C. L. Lambert, 'An army transport fleet', p. 52.

¹²⁷ E101/17/35.

¹²⁸ The handwriting of the source suggests that it is from the latter part of the reign of Edward II or the early years of Edward III's reign. In addition, when we compare the account to the 1322 Wardrobe payroll, none of the ships from the account appear in the *vadia nautarum*. Nor are they included in Richard Ferriby's Wardrobe accounts of 1334–36. Further, when they are compared to another account that consists of ships from the southwest ports (E101/19/26, mm. 3–4) none of the ships can be located in that document either. One of the ships, however, is listed in a payroll relating to the St Sardos campaign. The ship and master appear in the particulars of Walter de Oterhampton, receiver of ships and victuals at Portsmouth (E101/17/3). The ship is the *Godyer* of Teignmouth, commanded by William Kayn (*ibid.*, m. 6d). In Oterhampton's account the detail on the ship is of course more comprehensive and we are told that it had a crew of one constable, twenty-seven mariners and served for fifty-four days at a cost of £17 11s. But this is the only ship out of the undated document that is visible in any account relating to royal campaigns of the early 1320s. These comparisons suggest the list is connected with neither the 1322 campaign nor the St Sardos expedition, and will it be taken to represent a list of arrested ships in the late 1327. Because of the lack of Wardrobe documentation relating to the 1327 Weardale campaign difficulties are encountered when trying to compare sources. On the reasons for the lack of evidence, see N. B. Lewis, 'The summons of the English feudal levy: 5 April 1327', in *Essays in medieval history presented to Bertie Wilkinson*, ed. T. A. Sandquist and M. R. Powicke (Toronto, 1969), pp. 236–49.

burthen and above should be requisitioned. The master is also recorded, and importantly, the mainpernor or guarantor. This is another feature of the document that points to it being part of the first phase of the process of requisition. It seems probable that at this stage the shipmaster was given the 'king's shilling'. This is similar to the way in which retinue captains received advance payments before their service.¹²⁹ Having received such a payment the master could issue himself and his crew their first instalment of wages, thus increasing the chances that they would honour their arrest orders and appear at the port of embarkation. But, just in case, a mainpernor was recorded who was in effect guaranteeing that the ships would turn up at the muster port. This had a twofold purpose. First, the mainpernor would be a locally influential person whose authority the shipmasters would not wish to question; perhaps they were shipowners. Secondly, if the ship failed to appear the crown could redeem its initial payment.

The document, therefore, fills all the criteria for the first stage of the requisition process: port name, ship name, tunnage, master's name and a mainpernor. The format of the individual lines in the document is: '*navis que dictus Godyer de C dolia un magister William Kayn per manus Henry Cornwall*'. In another Chancery Miscellanea document, it is possible to see the process of money recovery from shipowners and mainpernors who had guaranteed that vessels would appear at the port of embarkation. It lists the names of over three hundred ships which refused to go on service with Walter Mauny during the Low Countries campaigns of 1337–40.¹³⁰ In some cases the name of the owner of the vessel, as well as that of the master, is recorded and in other cases the name of the mainpernor is listed with the ship and master. For example, one ship from Whitby, simply described as *Une Nief* and commanded by William Page, also has the name of the mainpernor, Thomas Complin, listed next to him. Under the port of Hull, the ship *Mighel* is described as being commanded by William de Wende

¹²⁹ See A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, pp. 141–42. This 'prest' payment would usually be the first quarter payment. Indeed, in June 1336 the ships arrested for service in North Wales refused to set out until they had been prepaid their wages and the king ordered the earl of Arundel to pay the ships' crews a reward. See *Foedera*, II, ii, p. 941. In addition, Bartholomew Garlek, mariner, was placed under arrest in July 1339 for taking his wages but failing to turn up at the port of embarkation, and as a punishment he was released to work in the Tower of London (CCR, 1339–41, p. 246). Furthermore, certain mariners operating ships of Bayonne were paid their wages prior to the Crécy campaign, and again there were problems as some of them failed to appear at the embarkation point (CPR, 1345–48, p. 109). The arrangements for the St Sardos campaign involved the royal clerks producing a note of the ships' names, home ports and crew sizes so as to receive their first quarter wages: see R. A. Kaner, 'The management of the mobilisation of English armies', p. 85. And in 1360 Matthew Torkeseye issued a prest payment of 60s to the crew of the *Newseintemarye* for their wages (E101/27/16).

¹³⁰ C47/2/30, mm. 1–2, 1d–2d. Mauny was involved in maritime affairs because he launched an attack on the island of Cadzand in 1337. In 1338 he was appointed admiral of northern fleet. For his appointment as admiral, see CPR, 1338–40, p. 70. For Mauny's attack on Cadzand, see *Chroniques de Froissart*, ed. S. Luce (Paris, 1869), vol. 1, pp. 213–14.

but being owned (*seignior*) by Michael Tinnok.¹³¹ This list of defaulters was probably drawn up on Mauny's authority to facilitate the recovery of prepaid wages from the owners and mainpernors of these vessels. It also provides a definitive list of the masters, who would no doubt be apprehended on their return to port.

The original arrest list played an important part in the second phase of the requisition process and these documents would be taken to the embarkation port and the ships would be 'ticked off' by the clerks.¹³² Those vessels from the stage-one ship list that appeared would then be recorded on another much longer roll. It would be longer because this second stage ship list would include all the vessels arrested from every port. This list would therefore combine the details of dozens of individual arrest lists compiled at the start of the requisition process (like those discussed above) into one more manageable document. The simplest way to compile such records would be to expect that on arrival each master would appear before the clerks and state his name and that of his ship. He would then be located on the first list and ticked off so as to be recorded on the second. This verification process would also provide the start date for the crew's service.¹³³ This procedure would be repeated at the port of disembarkation, thus providing a finish date for the ship's service. A third stage ship list would then be written up.¹³⁴

The question to be answered at this point is can we find a document that links the first phase of the requisition process to the second? Careful scrutiny of surviving ship lists reveals two good candidates. Both are to be found in the

¹³¹ C47/2/30, m 1.

¹³² In fact the requisition of ships in this period would have generated a mass of supporting documentary evidence, which would have been discarded after the final payrolls had been compiled because it no longer served a purpose. However, these documents could prove to be useful in cases where there was a failure by shipmasters to turn up at embarkation or after they had deserted during a campaign. These early lists could therefore be used as identification markers to facilitate the punishment of offenders. It was from such early documentation within the requisition process that Walter Mauny would have identified the hundreds of ships that failed to appear between 1337 and 1340; and presumably William Edington also used such early documentation in 1342 to identify and punish the deserters during the 1342 Brittany campaign. See C47/2/30; CCR, 1343–46, pp. 128–32. In effect what we are seeing in the surviving sources is only a fraction of what was compiled when ships were requisitioned for service. See M. T. Clanchy, *From memory to written record* (London, 1979), Chapter 2, which gives a lucid description of the proliferation of records that could result from just one order issued from the centre of government.

¹³³ Although at first glance this procedure seems open to fraud it is in fact quite the opposite. For if a master was to appear at the embarkation billet and claim he was about to transport troops over to the continent, with the avowed purpose of claiming wages for doing nothing, he would also have to be ticked off at the disembarkation point, which means that he would have to sail to France anyway.

¹³⁴ The task of unloading the men, horses and supplies at the point of disembarkation was likely to have been an ordered process with the ships unloading in small groups throughout the day. This would, therefore, make the task of recording the ships and masters' names much easier.

Chancery Miscellanea bundles.¹³⁵ One of them is a list of shipmasters who were to receive payment for transporting the king and Walter de Mauny to Brittany in October 1342.¹³⁶ This document records the names of 330 ships and masters. The ships are grouped in ports but the port names are not used as subheadings; they simply follow the names of the ship and master. The document records no pay details at all, which may appear curious, because it was William Edington, treasurer of the Wardrobe, who compiled the roll. The explanation is however quite straightforward. This second stage ship roll had been compiled from the original first-stage requisition lists, and the records taken of the ships at the point of disembarkation that had completed their required service.¹³⁷ This second-stage ship list has kept the original ports and the vessels from them grouped together because it has been compiled from the original arrest lists, which record ships according to ports. But there are no dates of service or pay details recorded because these are only included in the final payroll, compiled from the second-phase ship list. If we compare the second-stage ship roll to Edington's final *vadia marinariorum* accounts the order of the ports and ships is more or less the same. In addition, the same anomalies appear in both the second-stage list and the final Wardrobe book. Henry Goldeneye, master of the *Godyer* of Rye, is repeated twice in both documents.¹³⁸ This suggests that the second-stage ship roll and the Wardrobe accounts are related to each other with one being used to compile the other. Alternatively, there are also differences between them. Eighteen ships from Dover in the *vadia marinariorum* are listed as coming from Sandwich on the Chancery Miscellanea roll.¹³⁹ However, this difference can be explained by re-examining the document from the first phase of the arrest process. For instance, under the port heading of Teignmouth, two ships are recorded which are not from that port. One is from Drogheda and the other from Lyme Regis.¹⁴⁰ These ships would seem to have been arrested whilst trading at Teignmouth. This could create confusion when this first stage document was used as the template for the second- and third-phase records. Thus, those eighteen ships from Dover had probably been arrested at Sandwich and

¹³⁵ C47/2/25, no. 15; C47/2/35.

¹³⁶ C47/2/35.

¹³⁷ The Chancery Miscellanea list was certainly compiled before the Wardrobe accounts were drawn up. A comparison between the two documents shows this. For example, when the Chancery list is compared with the Wardrobe accounts forty-eight ships are absent from the Chancery roll. When these are compared to the 230 ships that deserted the king outside of Brest and Vannes we find that only six are listed as deserter ships, which means that the majority of the ships cannot have been docked pay as a result of their actions. The fact that there are forty-eight more ships in the Wardrobe accounts means that these vessels must have been added to the final accounts after the Chancery roll had been written up.

¹³⁸ E36/204, p. 229; C47/2/35, m. 2.

¹³⁹ E36/204, p. 225; C47/2/35, m. 2.

¹⁴⁰ E101/17/35. See also Chapter 4, pp. 174–83 below for a more detailed analysis of how the trading patterns of ships could complicate the requisition process.

recorded as such on the first stage roll. Because the second stage ship list is formed by ticking off from the first-stage roll, the mistake had made its way into every stage of the process, except the final payroll, which had to be sent to the Exchequer for audit and would usually be accompanied by supporting documentation compiled throughout the requisition process. It is likely that at some point this supporting documentation had illuminated errors in the original first-stage ship lists, which were then rectified on the final payroll. Similarly, tunnage figures of ships could make their way into the final accounts simply because they were recorded at every stage of the process. So, for example, the payroll that records the ships that transported the Black Prince to Gascony in the 1360s has a record of each individual ship's tunnage.¹⁴¹

The final stage of the process was for the clerks to compile the payroll, which would then be submitted to the Exchequer for audit. By using the first stage ship lists as the basis for the second stage roll, which now recorded the vessels that had actually embarked and disembarked the troops, they would have simplified their task of compiling the final pay accounts. At this point the clerks would have a start date and an end date for each ship, as well as an accurate list of those ships that had completed their service. At the end of the second stage the first phase lists of arrested vessels would be relegated to a secondary purpose and the clerks would retire to their offices to compile the payroll from the second-stage ship lists. This is not to say that other documentation would not play its part. For example, the Brittany second stage roll does not contain all the vessels that are recorded in the final Wardrobe accounts: and forty-eight ships' crews are recorded wages in the Wardrobe book that are not enrolled on the second stage list. But throughout such a complicated and large-scale process other rolls would have been generated which obviously included the extra ships added to the final wage accounts. Indeed, during the requisition process for the 1338 Low Countries campaign several sets of particulars were compiled concurrently with the Wardrobe accounts.¹⁴² In fact, Norwell used them to compile his final records, but he simplified the information that they contained when he incorporated the ships recorded on them into his Wardrobe accounts. For example, John Watenhul compiled one of these related Exchequer particulars for the ships gathered at Sandwich.¹⁴³ The account records the wages paid to 130 ships from thirty-five ports, and it includes the exact dates of service. Yet when these vessels appear in the Wardrobe records Norwell only provides the number of days each ship served.

¹⁴¹ E101/29/1. In the preparations for the 1338 Flanders campaign several Exchequer documents were drawn up concurrently with the Wardrobe accounts, while the former records the tonnages of the vessels the latter does not, see E101/21/10; E101/21/12. Tonnages were recorded more regularly in the 1380s because of the system of tuntight. This was when ship-owners received 3s 4d per tun for every quarter year served.

¹⁴² E101/21/7; E101/21/10; E101/21/12; E101/21/21.

¹⁴³ E101/21/7, mm. 2–3.

The discussion above has shown the complex bureaucratic process that underpinned the raising of a supply or transport fleet. What we now turn to is an examination of this process in action so we can fully appreciate its sophistication. In order to do this the maritime logistical preparations for the 1346 expedition will be investigated because it was during this campaign that the procedure arguably reached its apogee.

England's maritime resources were undoubtedly at their greatest stretch and made their largest contribution to Edward III's wars during the Crécy/Calais expeditions of 1346–47. That the 1346 invasion was achieved at all highlights the robustness of the system by this stage in Edward III's wars. Suggestions that the English merchant fleet could not produce armadas of the magnitude fielded in 1346 are wide of the mark, and as the evidence in Tables 3.3 and 4.1 shows, Edward had large reserves of ships and seafarers to call upon.¹⁴⁴ The main issue was not so much the absolute number of ships available as the capacity to requisition and dispatch them, in good order, to an embarkation port with sufficient speed so as not to disrupt the timetable for the planned campaign. This managerial and organisational problem dogged Edward's preparations in the build-up to the 1346 expedition. In the face of it he raised his largest ever transport fleet over a period of several months between the autumn of 1345 and the spring of 1346, a period during which storms lashed the English coast and further altered his plans. His officials, now experts in ship requisition, managed to make ready a substantial fleet by June 1346.

The Crécy transport fleet marks a dramatic departure in size and scale compared to the previous continental ventures of Edward III. Although the 1346 transport armada was only 100 or so ships larger than the Brittany fleet of 1342–43 there was a major organisational difference between the two expeditions. Whereas in 1346 a single fleet was divided between two ports ready to transport the largest army of the reign, the Brittany campaign occurred over a year and involved three quite separate transport flotillas. The earlier expeditions to the Low Countries in 1338–40 were also formed into two fleets, requiring the mobilisation of armadas of up to 400 ships at a time. By comparison in 1346 a further 350 vessels were arrested. That the admirals and their staff achieved

¹⁴⁴ J. Sumption, *Trial by battle*, p. 492, who when commenting on the fleet of 1346 states that 'to transport in one crossing the enlarged army that was now envisaged would have at least required 1,500 ships, which was probably more than the entire English merchant marine could furnish'. Also, see J. S. Kepler, 'The effects of the battle of Sluys', p. 77, who stated that the Crécy fleet would 'denude the entire country of shipping'. In fact Kepler seriously underestimates the size of the English merchant marine and he also argues that acts of piracy committed by a handful of vessels could hamper the crown when it was raising a fleet because these vessels were at sea and not in their home ports waiting requisition (*ibid.*, p. 73). This statement is based on the assumption that if sixty or so vessels were at sea Edward would struggle to locate more ships. These two accounts greatly underestimate the size of the English merchant marine.

this shows how ship requisition had evolved under Edward III into an effective system.¹⁴⁵

The book of foreign receipts compiled by Walter Wetwang shows how the admirals and their staff went about the work of raising the largest single transport fleet of the fourteenth century. The whole coast of England was divided into small units. There were still two admiralties but these were further subdivided and formed into distinct areas. Although the admirals still held overall authority within their administrative areas, the sub-divisions within the admiralties allowed the clerks to be more efficient when it came to finding and requisitioning ships. Thus, the new zones of requisition did not respect the normal divide between those ports north of the Thames and those south and west of the Thames. The result of this was that some sections of the coast were divided into three geographical areas. One zone was to cover the ports between King's Lynn and Berwick, one involved the ports situated in London, Kent and Sussex, while the third encompassed those ports between London and Lyme Regis. The vessels arrested in these last two 'zones' would normally be requisitioned among the ships prepared by the southern admiral and although he seems to have retained overall administrative authority he was freed from searching these three areas.¹⁴⁶ This short analysis of the 1346 expedition highlights how advanced the mobilisation of maritime resources for military campaigns had become by 1346. As noted the fact that over 700 vessels were eventually assembled for the Crécy expedition owes much to the cumulative experiences of the clerical officials who organised these logistical enterprises.

So far this chapter has explored the processes and some of the bureaucratic workings involved in raising a fleet. This procedure had developed over several decades into an efficient system, which under Edward III was in continuous use for the greatest part of his reign.¹⁴⁷ The historiography of requisition is right to suggest that individual teams of clerks were sent to ports to arrest ships of a certain size, which were then sent to the ports of embarkation and loaded with men, equipment and horses for transportation to a theatre of war. Yet the

¹⁴⁵ Although the gathering ships were organised to be in two ports during 1346 this was probably more to do with the available harbour facilities rather than the division of the process into two individual parts. There would have been major logistical problems, if 747 vessels had been holed up in one port; however, it is certainly true that this number of ships formed one large fleet in the vicinity of the Isle of Wight in July.

¹⁴⁶ C76/23, mm. 20–21; *Foedera*, III, i, p. 66; E101/390/12, fols 3r, 3v, 7r, 7v, 8r; E403/366, mm. 42–44. These arrangements were not entirely novel by 1346 and in the early years of Edward III's reign the coast had been divided into small 'zones' so as to make the work of the officials much easier. For example, in order to requisition a fleet in 1336 the coastline was separated into five areas, see for example, G. R. Cushway, 'The lord of the sea', pp. 155–57.

¹⁴⁷ C. Lloyd, *The British seaman: a social survey, 1200–1860* (London, 1968), p. 16, states that there was no continuity in medieval naval history, no administrative structure and no consistency in policy. This suggestion is not supported by the evidence. Indeed, there was great continuity in the administrative staff who organised the logistical operations.

mechanics of this procedure and the labour involved in recording the ships' service through three distinct phases has not been appreciated. Each phase produced a ship list that simplified the procedure and made compiling the final payroll much easier. Without such an efficient operation manned by experienced and capable clerks the king would not have been able to realise, or attempt to realise, his ambitions abroad.

This is not to say that this process always operated smoothly and the kings of the period experienced timetable problems when attempting to assemble transport flotillas. Causes of disruption included the refusal of mariners to serve and objections raised by the ports themselves. Preparations for the 1324 St Sardos transport fleet highlight some of these difficulties. For example, the armada of September 1324 was originally set to leave in June of that year. One reason for this delay was the refusal, in June, of shipmasters from Devon, Somerset and Dorset to allow their vessels to be requisitioned.¹⁴⁸

Furthermore, although in 1324 some of the ships were at the port of embarkation from June onwards, their crews were engaged piecemeal from mid-July to October. Gilbert Saundre, master of the *Godyer* of Dartmouth, was paid wages for himself, one constable and twenty-eight mariners from 12 July to 11 October 1324, while a further six mariners only served from 1 August to 11 October, and eight took wages for no more than 13 days in October. Moreover, Lawrence atte Lane, master of the *Richgayne* of Weymouth, was paid wages for himself and twenty-eight mariners for 92 days; yet from 31 August to 11 October 1324, seven further mariners were admitted to the crew '*pro dupplici eskipamento*'.¹⁴⁹ The evidence shows, therefore, that while the ships waited at the embarkation port for troops to arrive a constant flow of extra seamen were admitted to the ships. This also means that the mariners who joined the waiting ships were not recruited from the vessels' home ports. Indeed, because admirals sometimes worked alongside commissioners of array it is likely that some of the manpower utilised on board the ships was raised from counties with no coastline.¹⁵⁰ But due to the manpower shortages only two-thirds of the ships were sufficiently well manned to enable them to go on active service by July 1324.

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The analysis above has outlined the procedures used by the crown to raise a fleet and leads us to the conclusion that there were clear efficiency gains by the

¹⁴⁸ CCR, 1323–27, p. 194.

¹⁴⁹ BL, Add MS 7967, fols 94r–98r.

¹⁵⁰ On the admirals working alongside the commissions of array, see R. M. Hedley, 'The administration of the navy', pp. 20–33. It was not an urgent requirement that all the men on board a ship should be experienced seamen. As long as there was a master who could navigate and a few other experienced mariners, the rest of the crew were there simply for the muscle power needed to operate a ship. A vessel with only a single mast would require only a small number of experienced men to direct the others on how to operate it.

mid-1340s. Yet, a full understanding of fleet raising is beset with interpretational difficulties, especially with regard to those transport fleets for which we have no surviving documentation. Substantial fleets for France were raised in 1345, 1350, 1355 and 1359, and none has a full set of surviving payrolls relating to mariner service.¹⁵¹ How can we explain this apparent lacuna in the accounting procedures?

One immediate obvious point of similarity between the 'missing' fleets of the 1340s and 1350s is that they occurred when there were multiple armadas in preparation for the king and his lieutenants. This was a strategy Edward repeatedly employed after the initial Low Countries campaigns, as it stretched French forces and diluted their combat strength at any single point. From a cursory review of the evidence, it seems that when the crown was organising a multi-front assault on France the fleets used directly by the king were subject to different payment procedures from those of the lieutenants sailing at the same time. In 1345 while Edward crossed to the Low Countries, Henry of Grosmont sailed for Gascony. Henry's fleet is fully recorded and paid for in the usual manner yet the king's is not.¹⁵² It was the same in 1355, when the king and Lancaster sailed to northern France and the Black Prince sailed to Gascony.¹⁵³ The last mentioned fleet is recorded in the payrolls. This seems to suggest that when there was a need to deploy multiple fleets the arrangement for the payment of the transportation for part of the forces under king was carried out in a different manner from the normal procedure. For example, it is known that in 1359 one fleet out of the six that sailed was paid for by means of private enterprise.¹⁵⁴ On this occasion the retinue captains were given cash payments by the crown with which they hired their own ships for the campaign. It is likely that the new advance payments, such as *regard*, were intended, in part, to cover the costs of hiring ships for their transportation [i.e. the advance payments now included a portion of *regard*].¹⁵⁵ This eased the pressure off the crown by passing the burden of ship provision

¹⁵¹ Although the fleet of 1345 may have been recorded in the lost Wardrobe accounts of Walter Werwang the payments that the latter lists in his book of foreign receipts (E101/390/12) are too small to cover the fleet of 1345.

¹⁵² Lancaster's fleet is enrolled on E101/25/9.

¹⁵³ The Prince's fleet payrolls are recorded on E101/26/36; E101/26/37; E101/26/38. The payments issued to mariners enrolled on the Issue Rolls (E403/377, mm. 18, 24) probably relate to the first instalments of wages given over to those seamen involved in transporting the troops raised through commissions of array or those retinue captains who still had shipping provided for them, as some did in 1359, who formed part of the king's 1355 expedition. It has previously thought that there were three fleets, which all sailed in 1355 commanded by the king, the prince and Lancaster, however, C. J. Rogers, *War cruel and sharp*, p. 293, n. 38 has convincingly argued that Lancaster was actually part of the king's flotilla of that year. So in 1355 there were two fleets and not three.

¹⁵⁴ See A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, appendix 2, pp. 265–71.

¹⁵⁵ On *regard*, see *ibid.*, pp. 110–14. It is interesting to note that introduction of *regard* in 1345 coincides exactly with the new fleet-raising procedures, which were adopted after the 1342 Brittany expedition. This is dealt with more thoroughly in Chapter 4 below.

directly on to the serving captains. This system seems to have been in place before the 1359 campaign, as evidenced by the missing payrolls for the royal fleets of 1345 and 1355.

The adoption of this policy can be traced back to the Brittany campaign of 1342. The importance of this particular expedition stems from the fact that it was the first time Edward made war in France relying solely on English and Welsh manpower.¹⁵⁶ In the 1338–40 Low Countries campaigns, Edward's allies controlled large and busy ports in which ships could be docked, hired and organised with ease. In addition, the distance from England to these ports was relatively short and Edward had the luxury of having a safe harbour for disembarkation and territory in which to reside throughout the duration of the campaign. Therefore, the Brittany expedition created different problems for Edward when it came to deploying a fleet, and seems to have been the starting point when Edward and his advisors decided to alter the requisition procedure they had used hitherto for continental campaigns.

By analysing 1342 more closely we can see that during this expedition the crown attempted to operate a new system. The army transport fleets for the Brittany campaign sailed in three separate flotillas over an eight-month period. The first to take ship was the force commanded by Walter Mauny that landed in Brest in late March.¹⁵⁷ The earl of Northampton followed in August and finally the king sailed in October. The Brittany campaign is problematic because it is not known whether it was the original intention of the king to sail in one force or to spread the invasion out over three separate campaigns. However, it seems likely that the expedition unfolded as it did because several events conspired to affect the originally intended strategy. One of these was related to the administrative problems this expedition created. Another issue was the incursion of the Scots into northern England while the campaign was being planned. This diverted the king away from his continental project. A third issue related to the increasingly perilous situation in which the Montfortists found themselves by the spring of 1342. This required immediate support from England. Thus, Mauny was sent ahead with as large a force as he could transport in the available ships. After Mauny's truce had ended Charles de Blois again forced the Montfort supporters onto the defensive and it became necessary to send Northampton to their aid. Northampton's fleet had been under requisition for some time while the king waited for more ships to arrive at the embarkation port to take a much larger force, but desperate needs meant desperate measures: Northampton was sent on ahead with all the ships available at the time. These vessels were supposed to return to transport the king yet the sources reveal that at least thirty-one ships did not.¹⁵⁸ Therefore, the king's fleet was further delayed for want of available

¹⁵⁶ For a more detailed account of the Brittany fleets and their problems, see C. Lambert, 'An army transport fleet', pp. 7–13.

¹⁵⁷ C76/17, m. 44.

¹⁵⁸ CCR, 1341–43, pp. 621, 651–52, 664, 688, 697–98.

shipping.¹⁵⁹ In addition, the king's personal campaign was disrupted when 230 ships failed to stay on active service throughout the campaign.¹⁶⁰ What seems to have occurred over 1342 is that because the planned fleet was large the king initiated a ferry fleet system that was organised through the Wardrobe, which in turn was disrupted by, amongst other things, the external factors noted above.

Owing to the difficulties which the maritime operations encountered throughout 1342 it seems that Edward changed the methods he employed for raising a transport fleet when multiple flotillas were needed.¹⁶¹ Thus, in 1345, 1355 and 1359 Edward opted for a system that required certain contingents of the army to arrange their own shipping. It is likely that the war wages owed to retinue captains after the campaign had ceased included some recompense for transportation costs. Those campaigns, such as Henry of Grosmont's of 1345 and the Prince's of 1355, which were small enough to requisition ships in the normal fashion, were raised by means of the 'normal' procedure and paid through the Exchequer system. Although the problems encountered during the Brittany expedition surely played their part in changing the organisation of royal transport fleets it is beyond doubt that another factor was the capture of Calais. From 1347 English possession of Calais meant that in 1355 and 1359, the forces under the command of the king could disembark into a safe harbour. Consequently, any fleet that was to sail to Calais could be prepared at a more leisurely pace by means of private hire arrangements.¹⁶² The major development, therefore, was that maritime transportation for the larger sections of the army, usually under the command of the king, were paid for via private hire and not through the Exchequer, and so they did not generate enrolled particulars. This new organisa-

¹⁵⁹ The king had ordered the arrest and the confiscation of these ships for failing to return. However, he later cancelled these orders because of his, 'great need'. See CCR, 1341-43, pp. 629-30, 690.

¹⁶⁰ CCR, 1343-46, pp. 128-32.

¹⁶¹ This is analysed in more detail in Chapter 4 below. It was not the ferry fleet system itself was the wrong methods to employ, more the fact that in 1342 the Wardrobe had to manage the whole operation itself. Further it is important to recognise that the earl of Pembroke and Gloucester were also awaiting transport at Plymouth, so there were multiple fleets in operation in 1342. The earl's fleet was not paid through the Wardrobe accounts. Indeed the St Sardos campaign also sailed in three separate fleets. This view was also taken by J. S. Kepler, 'The effects of the battle of Sluys', pp. 70-77. It has to be noted that Kepler differs in the reasons he gives for the changes implemented after 1343 and he places more emphasis on the changes in the administration and management of officials. Although this is true in some respects Kepler fails to acknowledge that two large fleets (three if we include the 1337 flotilla of 150 ships requisitioned by Bartholomew Burghersh in 1337: see E101/19/39) were raised in 1338 and 1340 and several large armadas had been requisitioned and deployed in Scotland.

¹⁶² The king was still obliged to pay for the transportation of the captains who still had their shipping arranged for them, which explains the advances on wages recorded to mariners enrolled on E403/377, mm. 18, 24.

tional procedure explains the absence of payrolls relating to the king's campaigns after the Brittany expedition of 1342.¹⁶³

As we have seen the raising of a transport fleet was an extremely complicated task. It involved a level of administrative skill that was advanced for its time. This system had been evolving since the wars conducted by Edward I, and by 1360 it had been experimented with and manipulated to create an effective and sophisticated operation. The raising of a fleet was also a process that was organised and undertaken by skilled and experienced individuals who saw to it that the crown was adequately supplied with sufficient maritime resources. Considering these points it is unfortunate that this level of expertise still fails to be recognised by historians who concentrate on later periods and who generally argue that it was not until the Tudor period and beyond that great leaps forward in naval administration were made. Although it can still be argued that in the fourteenth century an unbroken line of naval developments and consistent infrastructure failed to be developed, it was also the case that between 1327 and 1359 naval forces were raised in every year, and by the 1330s and 1340s this was generally carried out by the same officials.¹⁶⁴

The Return Passage

The shipping of soldiers from England's ports to the continent was only half of the operation involved in any campaign. Once the army had completed its task and a victory or truce had resulted the thousands of soldiers who had originally sailed to France had to be safely shipped back to England. As with the outward fleets of 1340, 1345, 1355 and 1359, evidence as to how this was achieved is often absent. We know the service dates of the ships but these only show us the number of days ships were under arrest for, a time which also included the outward passage.¹⁶⁵ Because in this period the average length of time that fleets remained in service was for one month, when the land expeditions could go on for several months, the service dates of the fleet cannot include the time taken for re-passage.¹⁶⁶ We know that outward journeys to France were achieved quickly. In 1342 when the king crossed to Brittany his flagship made the crossing from Portsmouth harbour to Saint Mathieu in only one day, and in 1346 the voyage

¹⁶³ These new operational changes are discussed in Chapter 4, below

¹⁶⁴ The same is also for purveyance in which clerks such as William Dunstable collected victuals over a sustained period.

¹⁶⁵ Land forces received their wages from the day they arrived at the embarkation port, see A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, p. 146. It is assumed that the same system was in operation for the naval forces.

¹⁶⁶ The exception to this was the 1342 Brittany fleet, which operated for two months. However the majority of that fleet left service without permission in November. The army continued to serve until January 1343.

from the Isle of Wight to La Hougue took only one or two days.¹⁶⁷ That sea voyages were not long affairs can be evidenced by the fact that if the weather was fair it was possible to sail from southern England to Corunna in Spain in four days.¹⁶⁸ As such, providing the weather was stable, those ships sailing to both northern and southern France could make the crossing in, at most, several days.

This is not to say that all sources fail to provide evidence as to how some sections of the army were transported back to England. The Low Countries expedition of 1338–39 and the 1359–60 Reims campaign are illuminated by documentary evidence on the return fleets. In both cases the Wardrobe accounts show that re-passage payments were issued so that the retinue captains could transport their horses back to England after the cessation of hostilities.¹⁶⁹ The implication is that the captains themselves also took passage on these ships. But these two campaigns had the advantage of being carried out through allied territories or friendly ports. So, for example, the Low Countries expeditions provided the English with free access to several large ports and the Reims campaign ended with the English army making its way back to the safe environs of Calais. How would an English army be transported back to safety after a campaign in another part of France that was not as firmly entrenched as an ally of the English government? Of course, only one campaign here springs to mind, that of the Brittany invasion of 1342.¹⁷⁰

The maritime transportation problems relating to the English intervention in Brittany have been discussed above. But the complex issue of the return passage to England raises more areas of confusion. We know from chronicle evidence that the voyage home was perilous with several knights losing their

¹⁶⁷ For 1342, see E36/204, p. 31. The king actually boarded his ship on 16 October but he remained off the coast of England while the rest of the fleet coalesced into one large armada before finally sailing to Brittany on the 25 October. He arrived at St Mathieu on 26 October. However, he did not sail into Brest harbour until 27 October. So Edward was actually at sea for ten days in October, two of which seem to have been the crossing. In 1346 Edward wrote a letter from the Isle of Wight on 7 July, so it is likely that his fleet crossed the Channel at some point after this date. It is known that Edward was still gathering forces on the Isle of Wight during this period, so it is likely that he sailed for France a few days after 7 July. See, for example, *BPR*, III, p. 413, which shows that the Black Prince and his officers were still collecting soldiers during their stay on the Isle of Wight. The passage relates to a plea for respite of debts owed to the Prince by one Thomas de Crue of Chester who stated that he and his brother were commanded to board the Prince's ship by his sergeants-at-arms at the Isle of Wight and that 'he received no wages for his labour at the battle of Crécy, and when his brother was wounded at the battle and he went with him to the hospital to succour him he received no reward'.

¹⁶⁸ W. R. Childs, *Anglo-Castilian trade in the later middle ages* (Manchester, 1978), p. 154.

¹⁶⁹ Norwell, pp. 386–87; A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, pp. 268–70.

¹⁷⁰ Campaigns conducted within the bounds of Gascony operated within English controlled lands and English officials directly controlled the port of Bordeaux. The royal led army of 1345 never campaigned directly on French soil and after the Crécy/Calais campaign of 1346–47 the English controlled Calais.

lives in the crossing.¹⁷¹ This provides proof that there had been some re-passage arrangements for the English and Welsh soldiers serving in the campaign. The king's journey home can be traced with more certainty by following the entries recorded in the Wardrobe accounts. Edward's return voyage took just under three weeks and he sailed via the island of Le Ragg (13 February), Le Blank Sabloini (14 February), Congueste (16 February), Port Crouidum (19 February), then back to Blank Sabloini (23 February). He was at sea on the last day of February before sailing into Melcombe Regis on 1 March 1342.¹⁷² The king, of course, always had transportation by utilising royal ships, but how did the rest of the force make it home?

There are several possibilities as to how this was achieved, some with more credence than others. For instance, the return fleet could have been recorded on a now lost payroll. But this has to be doubtful. Since both Norwell and Farley recorded their re-passage payments through the Wardrobe system, it is likely that Edington would have done the same.¹⁷³ The second possibility is that the return flotilla was made up entirely of the defaulters from the previous year, but this seems unlikely because no new requisition orders to form such a large fleet were issued during the winter of 1342–43.¹⁷⁴ It should be noted, however, that some orders contained in the *Close Rolls* state that the 230 ships are to be arrested so that punishment can be issued to them. And there is evidence that some of the ships involved in the return passage were deserters from the previous October and November.¹⁷⁵ In addition, other vessels were in the Brittany area on supply missions and they could also have been involved in the re-passage of sections of the English army. For example, the *Katerine* of Bayonne, commanded by Peter Bernardi de Tholoso, was allowed in January of 1343 to sell merchandise 'for the maintenance of the men about to set out to the king in Brittany, in Peter's galley, in going and returning'.¹⁷⁶ These scattered entries provide slight evidence of small numbers of ships that could have been involved in the transportation of troops back to England after hostilities ceased in early 1343. But the numbers of

¹⁷¹ *Anonamille*, pp. 17–18; *Knighton*, p. 47; *Melsa*, III, pp. 51–52; *Murimuth*, p. 135.

¹⁷² E36/206, pp. 37–39; CCR, 1343–46, p. 97.

¹⁷³ *Norwell*, pp. 386–92. On Farley's accounts, see A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, pp. 286–70.

¹⁷⁴ There were 230 ships that had disobeyed the king's orders in 1342 and sailed back to England. Some of these were punished by having their pay deducted and it is possible that many of these were later sent back to Brittany as re-passage vessels.

¹⁷⁵ CCR, 1341–43, p. 630. This shows that the *Nicholas*, commanded by John Galay was serving at his own costs for failing to appear at the previous transport fleet and he was to freight the earls of Huntingdon and Arundel to Brittany in January 1343. Yet these reinforcements were cancelled so it is possible that Galay's ship still served but as part of the return fleet of that month. Similar orders were hanging over the head of William Asshendon of Dartmouth, see CPR, 1340–43, p. 568; CCR, 1341–43, p. 630.

¹⁷⁶ CCR, 1341–43, p. 625.

such vessels are inadequate for a satisfactory explanation as to how the English army returned home.

Perhaps the strongest possibility is that the return fleet was paid for out of the coffers of the ducal revenues. It is known that in April 1342 the Montfortists had agreed to supply Edward with £14,600 towards the cost of the English war effort. Moreover, the end of the campaign in 1343 placed the whole of the ducal income in the hands of the English, and the duchess and her son were taken back to England for safe keeping.¹⁷⁷ In addition, many soldiers involved in the Brittany expedition did not return to England but accompanied the earl of Derby to the siege of Algeciras, thus greatly reducing the number of men who required passage.¹⁷⁸ Moreover in addition to going with Derby to Spain many English troops remained in Brittany to man the newly established English garrisons in the duchy. Another issue worth taking into account is that after an expedition the number of horses which required re-passage would be fewer than had initially crossed due to losses in the field while on campaign.¹⁷⁹ Finally, after the truces had been agreed it would have been possible for some soldiers to cross overland to other areas where shipping was more plentiful. In short, of the 3,800 English troops that initially crossed over to Brittany during 1342 perhaps only half required re-passage back from the ports of Brittany. It seems likely that this would have been achieved over a period of several weeks in a piece-meal fashion by ships serving for various reasons and paid for by differing accounting methods.

Although we have no evidence relating to the return passage of the main army that fought under the king in 1342, Walter Mauny's expedition conducted in the spring and early summer of that year is fully recorded with a return fleet. Mauny embarked for Brittany at the end of March 1342 in thirty-six ships and the force under his command served until early July 1342. In Edington's Wardrobe book twenty-four of the thirty-six ships that originally transported this small force to Brittany were kept in service until 29 June with a further two vessels serving until 1 July. These twenty-six ships were obviously Mauny's means of returning back to England. Why this fleet is recorded in the final accounts of the campaign, while the king's is not, can only remain in the realms of speculation. However, the small size of Mauny's fleet is the most obvious answer. By examining the orders issued by Edward at the outset of the campaign it is beyond doubt that the king wished all the vessels in his transport fleet to remain on active service until the expedition had ended. But the large number of ships that were ordered to remain under arrest meant that it was unlikely that such a fleet would stay in

¹⁷⁷ *Foedera*, II, ii, p. 1198; J. Sumption, *Trial by battle*, p. 390.

¹⁷⁸ *Knighton*, p. 47. Knighton's words suggest that the numbers of men who accompanied Lancaster to Spain were substantial, 'et exinde multi Angligene et Francigene transierunt ad Spruciam ad bellum campestre'.

¹⁷⁹ A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, p. 263. For example Northampton's retinue lost thirty-seven horses and Ralph Stafford's forty-two.

Brittany throughout the winter, and once significant numbers of vessels began to desert the king a domino effect seems to have taken place among those that had, initially, remained behind. Perhaps a large part of the explanation as to why the return fleets are not fully recorded lies in the fact that the accounting process in the 1330s and 1340s was not fully standardised. When we consider that the scale and scope of military expeditions had increased more than threefold from 1322 to 1347 it is not surprising that the clerks were still grappling with how to record all this material.

Although return fleets are somewhat difficult to trace the evidence we do have shows beyond doubt that the king provided shipping for both outward and return voyages. For example, the indenture sealed between Henry of Grosmont and the king in 1345 stated that the earl was to have shipping both 'in going and returning at the cost of the king'.¹⁸⁰ This does not say that the king will provide shipping just that he will pay for it. The implication here is that the outward voyage was organised by the king but Lancaster arranged his return transport in Bordeaux and the crown reimbursed him on his return. In addition, the indenture that was sealed between Edward and the Black Prince in 1355 explicitly states that the king will 'provide sufficient shipping for the passage of the prince and all his men, as well as planks, hurdles and all other things necessary for their shipment both going and returning'.¹⁸¹ Unfortunately, the return wages paid to mariners seem to be mostly absent from the Exchequer evidence, suggesting varying methods of payment were used.¹⁸² It is unfortunate that the earlier return fleets, or payments issued for them, are not recorded. However, the information contained in both Norwell's and Farley's Wardrobe accounts seem to show that some form of re-passage was arranged and perhaps we should

¹⁸⁰ K. Fowler, *The king's lieutenant: Henry of Grosmont first duke of Lancaster* (London, 1969), appendix 1, pp. 222–50.

¹⁸¹ BPR, IV, p. 144–45.

¹⁸² It is possible that the Exchequer clerks in England only recorded and paid the outward fleet simply because this was easier for them to do in England than it was on the continent. And it is also probable that the wages of war paid to commanders after the campaigns that they had been involved in had ended did include money for the re-passage payments that they had arranged and paid for themselves. Thus, the wages of war issued to retinue captains, including *regard* payments, were for the increased costs of campaigning in France, which required the hiring of ships. *Regard* was not normally paid to men serving in Scotland and the provision of *regard* and other bonuses really came to the fore during the continental wars when sea-borne transportation was an added expense to the crown, which it did not incur in the Scottish wars. On *regard* and its development, see A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, pp. 110–14. In the later part of Edward III's reign certain accounts, compiled for the Exchequer, seem to contain more detail about the return passages. For example, E101/29/18, mm. 1–2, records the outward and return passage for John of Gaunt and the Black Prince from 1365 through to 1368 from England to Flanders and England to Gascony. Thirteen ships are recorded manned by 422 mariners and one sergeant-at-arms, two men-at-arms and two archers. Although such high ranking nobles would no doubt be afforded more security in terms of return shipping than the soldiers under their command.

treat Brittany as an anomaly. In short we ought to view the evolving accounting procedures as the main reasons as to why we have 'missing' evidence relating to the return fleets. This explains why in the 1370s and 1380s evidence relating to return passages is more complete because by this stage the recording of return fleets for armies serving on the continent had become standard accounting practice. For example, John of Gaunt's expedition to Normandy in 1369, which came to an overall cost of £74,934 6s 10d, did indeed include the payments for the re-passage of the horses and men back from Calais.¹⁸³ This suggests that similar methods had been in place in earlier campaigns.

This chapter has analysed the whole process of fleet requisition in the fourteenth century. It has examined the sources from which the crown secured its ships and the administrative process that was adopted in order to manage this. It shows that the system was complex, but not static. Indeed, in the 1340s there was a series of experiments in the organisation of the process that has left us with gaps in the source material. The analysis of the preparations for the 1346 armada was used as an example to show how sophisticated the fleet-raising operations had become by the mid-part of Edward III's reign. Finally, it also investigated the issue of the return fleets and concluded that the lieutenants serving in France had their outward and return shipping provided for them. On the outward journey the crown supplied the ships, whereas it seems likely that on the return journey the lieutenants organised and paid for these fleets themselves and were later reimbursed by the crown. How soldiers serving in expeditions such as Brittany in 1342 returned home is difficult to explain. It would seem that there are several explanations. It is possible that some men found their own way back, while others remained behind to man the garrisons or travelled further afield. However, it was also pointed out that the bureaucratic process was still developing and as such perhaps one of the main reasons for the lack evidence lies in some little understood accounting procedure.

¹⁸³ J. Sherborne, 'The cost of English warfare with France in the later fourteenth century', *BIHR* 1 (1977), pp. 135–50, p. 136. Gaunt also sailed to Gascony in 1370 and his re-passage payments were paid for him and his soldiers during this campaign, *ibid.*, p. 139.

The Supply of Armies and Garrisons by Sea, 1320–1360

Logistics and Preparations for War: An Overview of Procedures

Logistical preparation was one of the most important and complicated aspects of any campaign. Indeed, ensuring that an army would be fully supplied with foodstuffs has been described as one of the most difficult problems faced by any medieval government.¹ And once that army had made inroads and established garrisons, as the English did in Scotland, it was necessary also to make sure that those islands of occupation were fully supplied.² Without adequate provender the intended strategy of an invading force would collapse within weeks. Once food ran out and soldiers became hungry discipline would suffer and desertions increase. This was as obvious to a medieval commander as it is to modern strategists.³ Therefore, royal campaigns during the Edwardian period were usually preceded by months of meticulous planning.⁴ This is not to say that in every campaign during this period everything went according to plan and the army remained continually supplied with food. The 1322 and 1327 Scottish campaigns provide stark reminders that any medieval expedition, regardless of the prepara-

¹ C. S. L. Davies, 'Provision for armies, 1509–50: a study in the effectiveness of early Tudor government', *EcHR*, second series 17 (1964–65), pp. 234–48, p. 234. See also D. L. Smith, 'Muscovite logistics, 1462–1598', *The Slavonic and Eastern European Review*, 71, no. 1 (January, 1993), pp. 35–65, for an interesting discussion on Russian logistical operations that highlights the complexity of organising this dimension of an expedition.

² On the supply of garrisons, see D. Cornell, 'English castle garrisons in the Anglo-Scottish wars of the fourteenth century', (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Durham, 2005), pp. 60–75.

³ See, for example, M. K. Vaughn, 'For circumstances must dictate', pp. 1–3 in which Dr Vaughn draws attention to the fact that logistics are as vital to the success of a campaign as tactics and strategy.

⁴ See H. J. Hewitt, *The organization of war*, Chapter 3; M. Prestwich, *War, politics and finance*, Chapter 5 and *idem*, *Armies and warfare*, Chapter 10. These three accounts provide detailed analysis of the preparations, which went into campaigns in terms of supplying armies with victuals.

tions, could disintegrate due to lack of provender.⁵ And these two campaigns were a far cry away from the comment made by the Venetian envoy in 1497 who stated that, 'I have it on the best information that when war is raging most furiously, they (the English) will seek for good eating, and all their comforts, without thinking of what harm might befall them.'⁶ This chapter analyses the varying methods available to the government for supplying its forces.

During the forty years covered by this book the king had three major systems for supplying his armies: the crown could issue general purveyance orders, request that a sheriff from a particular county collect a specified amount of supplies, or involve private merchants in the operation.⁷ The procedures for the collection of victuals therefore varied according to which method the crown employed, although during the Edwardian period, all three methods usually operated concurrently.⁸ The most prominent of the three, especially in the campaigns before Edward III's French wars, was purveyance or the king's right to prise. This allowed the king to order anyone to sell foodstuffs and other supplies to the royal purveyors. This system was the medieval government's equivalent of a compulsory purchase order.⁹ The king could appoint sergeants-at-arms, usually with royal clerks in attendance, to go into the chosen counties to collect, record and pay for the foodstuffs ordered by the crown.¹⁰ The second method employed by the crown involved issuing an order to the sheriff of a designated county to collect a specified quantity of supplies from his bailiwick and then forward them to the collection point for trans-shipment. In 1336 Robert de Causton, sheriff of Norfolk, collected 196 quarters 6 bushels of malt and 27 bacons and sent them

⁵ For 1322, see Flores, III, p. 210; *Scalacronica*, p. 89; *Brut*, p. 225; *Anonimale*, p. 111; *Melsa*, III, p. 345; *Bridlington*, p. 79; *Murimuth*, p. 3; *Polychronicon*, VIII, p. 317. For 1327, see Le Bel in C. J. Rogers ed. *The wars of Edward III*, pp. 4–19.

⁶ Quoted in A. Goodman, *The wars of the roses* (London, 1981), p. 153.

⁷ J. Masschaele, 'Transport costs', pp. 266–67 suggests that the sheriff was the main agent in the arena of supply. However, this comment underestimates the role of private merchants, particularly after 1336 in the supply system. Alternatively D. S. Bachrach, 'Military logistics', p. 429 argues that operating the two systems of purveyance and private supply by merchants direct to the army was not generally successful. However, these two systems worked effectively in the Scottish wars of Edward III and the merchants of King's Lynn were instrumental in the supply operations from the late 1330s. See also M. K. Vaughn, 'For circumstances must dictate', pp. 234–76 for a discussion on how supplies were collected using these methods.

⁸ It has been suggested before that it is difficult to study the victual operations in the medieval period. See, for example, E. Amt, 'Besieging Bedford: military logistics in 1224', *JMMH* 1 (Woodbridge, 2001), pp. 101–24, p. 101. However, the Scottish and French wars of Edward II and Edward III are well illuminated with documentary evidence, which throws light on most aspects of the supply systems employed by the crown during this period.

⁹ A good discussion of this procedure can be found in C. Given-Wilson, *The royal household and the king's affinity* (New Haven, 1986), pp. 41–48.

¹⁰ *Rot. Scot.* I, p. 207, and R. Partington, 'Edward III's enforcers', provide examples of the sergeant-at-arms' role in purveyance. See also R. A. Kaner, 'The management of the mobilisation of English armies', p. 215.

to Ipswich and Great Yarmouth for the supply of the northern fleet.¹¹ Usually, though, for the royal campaigns, the sheriffs would be ordered to gather much larger amounts of victuals for dispatch to the supply depots of Newcastle or Skinburness, if the campaign was to be in Scotland or to King's Lynn, Sandwich or Portsmouth if the destination was France.¹² The third process that the king could employ was to allocate the task of supplying armies or garrisons to merchants. For instance, William de la Pole played an important role in supplying Edward's army at the siege of Berwick in 1333.¹³ But the two most significant merchants in this respect were Thomas and William Melcheburn of King's Lynn. Thomas and William were influential East Anglian merchants and almost single-handedly supplied the Scottish garrisons during the 1340s. They were throughout their careers deeply involved with first local and then national affairs, being custom collectors, royal advisors, envoys, king's bankers, sub-admirals and ship-builders.¹⁴

The above methods were used by the crown to supply the forces it raised. Yet, it is likely that alongside these centralised procedures for supply the magnates serving in any campaign would organise foodstuffs for themselves and their retinues. Both Andrew Harcla and Aymer de Valence sent ships to supply their retinues in the 1322 campaign; William de Bohun, earl of Northampton employed two of his ships to supply him with provender during his campaigns in Scotland in 1336, and in 1347 the earl of Lancaster was supplied by his own ship, the *Cogge Thomas of Lancaster*, during the siege of Calais.¹⁵ Whether or not

¹¹ E101/20/7, mm. 1, 2.

¹² E101/17/1 provides evidence that victuals for the St. Sardos campaign were to be shipped from King's Lynn. E101/17/3 shows supplies at Portsmouth. The involvement of the sheriff within the purveyance system could lead to corruption. However, it has been pointed out that although this did occur, it was in many ways the lesser evil of the many corrupt practices performed by the sheriffs. Edward III tended to keep as tight a reign as possible over his officials and there was a marked increase in judicial reviews and oyer and terminer commissions during the period of Edward's heightened campaigning years in the 1350s. On the corruption of sheriffs in the purveyance process, see R. Gorski, *The fourteenth-century sheriff: English local administration in the late middle ages* (Woodbridge, 2003), Chapter 4, pp. 112–19.

¹³ See *Cal. Inq. Misc.*, II, 1307–1349, no. 1496, p. 365; E372/177, m. 52; E. B. Fryde, *William de la Pole*, p. 42.

¹⁴ On the Melcheburn's roles during this period, see CPR, 1327–30, p. 104; CCR, 1333–37, p. 58; CPR, 1340–43, pp. 87, 146, 212; CPR, 1345–48, p. 248; *Foedera*, III, i, pp. 7, 24; E101/19/30; E101/19/31; M. Livingstone and M. Witzel, *The road to Crécy: the English invasion of France, 1346* (Harlow, 2005), p. 95. These sources provide details of all their activities during this period. Of course, private merchants acting on their own could supply armies but generally only when the force it was supplying was stationary such as those at Berwick in 1333 and Calais in 1347. Merchants did however help provision the 1327 Weardale army.

¹⁵ CPR, 1321–24, pp. 90, 107, 204; *Rot. Scot.* I, p. 417; CPR, 1345–48, p. 350. One of Valence's ships was called the *Garland* and de Bohun's ships were called the *Peter* and the *Katherine* commanded by Nicholas atte Putte and Roger Broun.

magnates organised their own supplies on a regular basis is difficult to establish because evidence of them doing so would not normally find its way into the central records.

This point is of more than academic interest because it affects whether we can safely assume that the foodstuffs collected for the royal campaigns of this period were for the consumption of the royal household and the general levies, rather than the contingents brought by the magnates. Moreover, if magnates did supply themselves, and their retinues, this would also increase the length of time the collected victuals, noted below, would last. It would seem reasonable to expect the magnates to supply themselves at the beginning of the campaign because an individual lord would have access to resources from his own estates. Furthermore, since the king would also expect monetary payments from those receiving the supplies he had collected by means of purveyance a magnate could save himself large amounts of money by supplying himself, and his retinue, with foodstuffs he had sourced from his demesne lands. Finally, most magnates were accustomed to a certain lifestyle and it is unlikely that they would want to experience the privations of the ordinary soldier on campaign. Indeed, the promise of adequate supplies would be more likely to attract men to their service, which would be an important consideration for any lord who had an indenture with the crown to fulfil. Thus, during the Welsh wars of Edward I several magnates certainly took the precaution of supplying their retinues in order to guarantee that men under their command would not desert on the grounds of inadequate supplies.¹⁶ Evidence relating to the 1327 Weardale campaign also suggests that magnates supplied themselves with victuals. The Bishop of Ely employed three ships for this purpose.¹⁷

These three systems of supply were of course interrelated and purveyance was crucial to all but the third method. The history of this practice has been dealt with in other works, but in general it stemmed from the ancient right of kings to take goods for their households. Purveyance was probably the issue, arising as a direct consequence of the increased militarisation under the Edwardian kings, which attracted the most complaints. Parliament after parliament aired grievances on the problems related to its use, and although the system became less demanding in the 1340s and 1350s, and its nomenclature changed, the government never really altered the essence of the system.¹⁸

¹⁶ D. S. Bachrach, 'Military logistics', p. 429, n. 30.

¹⁷ CPR, 1327–30, p. 141.

¹⁸ Rot. Parl. IV, pp. 340, 370; R.P. V, pp. 16, 17. For a detailed examination of the protests that purveyance created, see G. L. Harriss, *King, parliament and public finance in medieval England to 1369* (Oxford, 1975), Chapter 16, especially p. 376; E. B. Fryde, *Studies in medieval trade and finance* (London, 1983), p. 283; M. Prestwich, *Armies and warfare*, pp. 254–59. Of similar relevance is J. R. Maddicott, 'The English peasantry and the demands of the crown, 1294–1341', *Past and Present supplement* 1975, especially pp. 24–34. *Idem*, 'The county community and the making of public opinion in fourteenth century England', *TRHS* 28 (1978), pp. 27–43, p. 39, which details some instances of resistance to the king's collectors; W. R. Jones, 'Purveyance for

The extent of victual supply for the maintenance of mariners in royal service is difficult to establish. The main reason for this is that mariners usually served for much shorter periods than conventional contingents. For example, vessels in the fleet that transported the king to Brittany in 1342 served on average for forty-four days, and the majority (63%) of ships had completed their service by October 1342, whereas the army campaigned into early 1343.¹⁹ Furthermore, when orders to arrest ships were issued they usually specified that the vessels should turn up well victualled and munitioned, or '*bien aparaille*.'²⁰ In 1346, for example, every ship in the transport fleet carried enough supplies for fifteen days.²¹ Therefore, at the outset of a ship's period of service it usually carried enough victuals for the crew to sustain themselves. Alternatively, mariners could be paid their wages in foodstuffs. During the period 1337–49 Nicholas Pyk indented with 165 ship-masters to serve in various campaigns.²² Some of the mariners in these contracts were given their wages as victuals instead of money, or in a mixture of the two.²³ Major problems could occur, however, with regard to the supply of ships over extended periods of time. For instance, the fleet that transported the earl of Northampton to Brittany in August 1342 had in fact been under arrest from June of that year.²⁴ Since the number of ships waiting at Portsmouth numbered 145 there must have been a constant demand for food supplies because the provender that the mariners had brought with them would have been exhausted by early July.

There are a few documents that illuminate the procedure employed by the crown for supplying fleets over long periods.²⁵ The most informative of these is the account of William Dunstable concerning the money and victuals for the northern fleet from October 1336 to October 1338.²⁶ By closely examining this document we can see that the process of arranging victuals for mariners, over a lengthy period, had two distinct phases. First, the supplies were collected and

war and the community of the realm in late medieval England', *Albion* 7 (1975), pp. 300–16; C. Allmand, *The hundred years war*, p. 98.

¹⁹ For the naval periods of service, see C. Lambert, 'An army transport fleet' p. 86; for the land-based soldiers, see A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, appendix 2, pp. 258–62.

²⁰ *Rot. Scot.* I, p. 210; E372/180, m. 44; SC1/40, nos 10–20. The burden of initial provisioning of ships usually fell on their home ports. See R. A. Kaner, 'The management of the mobilisation of English armies', p. 229.

²¹ D. Hughes ed. *Illustrations of Chaucer's England* (London, 1918), p. 34; *Murimuth*, p. 200.

²² E101/20/39.

²³ For example, the mariners under the command of Simon Springet, master of the *Portejoie*, were paid 2 tuns of flour and 7 quarters of wheat. In other indentures the mariners are paid the second way: through a mixture of foodstuffs and money. For example, those serving on the *Cog Edward* were paid, '*et en vitailles 9li. et pro sallaires des marins. 11 li 6d*', see E101/20/39, no. 3.

²⁴ E372/187, mm. 42, 48.

²⁵ E101/20/1; E101/20/7; C47/2/27.

²⁶ E101/20/7, mm. 1–6.

sent to the ports of King's Lynn, Great Yarmouth, Ipswich and Hull, usually by appointed sheriffs who had to purvey foodstuffs in their counties. In this case William Muchet, sheriff of Cambridge and Huntingdonshire, supplied King's Lynn and Yarmouth with a little under 200 quarters of provender and 65 bacons. Similarly Robert de Causton, sheriff of Norfolk, delivered 200 quarters of victuals to Great Yarmouth.²⁷ Local merchants also contributed supplies to the process.²⁸

The second part of the process involved the preparation and distribution of the victuals to various mariners and others involved in the northern fleet. Usually some of the supplies, particularly wheat, were ground into flour at local windmills—in Boston and King's Lynn in this case—and then transported by river or cart to the granaries where it would be stored ready for distribution. Once at the port the victuals were transferred to large seagoing ships by lighters hired for the purpose. In September 1337, when the *Seinte Nicholas* and the *Petre* freighted supplies from Great Yarmouth to Sandwich, with the cost of *wyndage* amounting to 5s 2d per tun.²⁹

On arrival the victuals would be distributed to the mariners, men-at-arms and archers serving in the northern fleet. For example, the master of the *Portbiling* of Great Yarmouth received 2 quarters and 6 bushels of wheat for himself and his men; and from 8 July to 4 August, Reginald Godwyn supplied eighty men-at-arms and one-hundred-and-eighteen archers with 80 quarters of wheat. In this same period Dunstable dispensed 122 quarters 6 bushels and 11 parts of wheat to mariners at Hull. Moreover, although the admiral had the powers to purvey his own victuals Dunstable also supplied him for twenty-eight days in July 1337.³⁰ In total the whole account shows that the men of the northern fleet, over the two year period, consumed 4,507 quarters 6 bushels of wheat, 54 tuns 6 barrels and 151 quarters of flour, all protected by 80 measures of canvas, 275 quarters 1 bushel of beans and peas, 2,578 quarters 3 bushels of malt, 329 bacons, 1,877 tuns of salt fish and middle fish and 20 tuns of wine. All this was transported to the various ports for the men of the northern fleet in five large ships, four barges and numerous small boats (*naviculus*).

An alternative method was to supply ships that were anchored in port waiting transport troops to the campaign area.³¹ This process is illuminated by another

²⁷ *Ibid.*, m. 2.

²⁸ For instance, in July 1337 Reginald Godwyn provided 1 quarter of wheat for 5s, E101/20/7, m. 2. Cf J. Masschaele, 'Transport costs', p. 267.

²⁹ E101/20/7, m. 5.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, m. 2; E372/184, m. 3d.

³¹ A further method was for a sheriff or other official to transport supplies directly from England to the campaign area. This method worked particularly well when the army was stationery and was employed during siege operations. For example, in early 1347 and during the siege of Calais the sheriff of Essex sent seven ships from Colchester loaded with supplies to Edward's forces. These ships mainly freighted malt and oats, and the wages of the mariners and the costs of the supplies came to £93 6s 8d, see E101/556/37.

account. In June 1337 Robert Emeldon, clerk, was assigned to purvey victuals in Hampshire. The collected provisions were then to be distributed among the fleet of ships currently lying in Portsmouth harbour. Emeldon supplied a total of twelve vessels with wheat and wine. These twelve ships received a total of 56 quarters of wheat and 35 tuns of wine. The largest consumer was the crew of the *Cristofre*, commanded by Richard Fille, which had 10 quarters of wheat and 6 tuns of wine.³² The admiral of the fleet could also organise the purchase and distribution of supplies alongside the other existing methods used for collecting victuals. For example, in 1336 Geoffrey de Say, admiral of the king's fleet, recorded separately by receipt the victuals he bought from several merchants. These purchases included 20 quarters of wheat, 18 beef carcasses, and 56 muttons for £4 19s 4d from Ralph le Wayte.³³ Private individuals could also be allocated the task of supplying a fleet. This occurred during the preparations for the Crécy campaign when the abbot of Beaulieu sold victuals to the mariners of several king's ships. The account comes in the form of four individual receipts for wheat, beef, cider and conger eels.³⁴

Clearly, the scale of operations required to supply a medieval fleet should not be underestimated as it could involve enormous amounts of foodstuffs. A crew of forty mariners carrying forty horses, for example, could consume 2.2 tonnes of supplies per day.³⁵ The quantities of victuals that would be consumed by seafarers are illuminated by a document that shows us exactly the food requirements of 4,050 mariners.³⁶ This source relates to the provisioning of the northern admiralty and takes the form of a list of counties and their projected contributions to the victual requirements of the fleet. Lincolnshire, for instance, was expected to furnish 1,000 quarters of wheat, 1,700 quarters of barley, 800 quarters of beans and peas, 4,000 bacons, 6 lasts of herrings, 20,000 stockfish and 3,000 stones of cheese.³⁷ In total the seventeen counties listed were to contribute 9,100 quarters of wheat, 9,350 quarters of barley, 2,200 quarters of beans and peas, 6,000

³² E101/20/1.

³³ C47/2/27, no. 12.

³⁴ E101/24/12, nos. 1 and 2.

³⁵ R. W. Unger, 'The northern crusaders: the logistics of English and other northern crusaders', in *Logistics of warfare in the age of the crusades: proceedings of a workshop held at the centre for medieval studies, University of Sydney, 30 September to 4 October, 2002*, ed. J. H. Pryor (Aldershot, 2006), pp. 251–73, p. 262.

³⁶ C47/2/31. This is a difficult document and it comes in a file with nine individual membranes. Membranes 1–3 record the projected amounts of victuals that each county listed should provide, while membranes 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 lists the names of important magnates, retinue captains and the size of their projected retinues. For an enlightened discussion of the document, see M. Prestwich, 'English armies in the early stages of the hundred years war', p. 108.

³⁷ C47/2/31, no. 1.

quarters of oats, 12,960 bacons, 3,900 stones of cheese, 45 lasts of herrings and 32,400 stockfish, 60 tuns of ale and 100 tuns of cider.³⁸

Food was not the only requirement of a medieval fleet. Many of the ships were altered to make them fit for war; and they needed stocks of weapons for defence. This materiel must be factored into the logistics of sea transport. In 1339 Thomas de Snetesham supplied the king's ship *Phillipe*, commanded by Thomas Springet, with 30 padded shirts, 21 pieces of plate armour, 30 hauberks, 38 crossbows, 40 sheaves of barbed arrows, 200 cords for the bows, 13 *balistars*, 200 quarrels and 8 banners.³⁹ During a ten-year period Snetesham supplied the king's ships with a total of 599 *cuirass*s, 856 bascinets, 878 unspecified pieces of armour, 2,072 sheaves of arrows, 10 pikes, 199 *blasons* (a type of incendiary device), 95 *pousell* (a type of armour), 553 *aktuns* (a type of padded shirt), 256 crossbows, 300 darts, 750 bows and 3,843 windlass ropes.⁴⁰

So far we have analysed how armies were supplied before an expedition was launched, we now turn to an examination of the supply systems in place for more static forces such as garrisons. The supply of garrisons in Scotland was the responsibility of the keeper or receiver of victuals at Berwick or Newcastle.⁴¹ The workload of this official increased dramatically during the large invasions of the 1330s, but when the king's attention was drawn to the continent the scope of the operation was scaled down commensurately. This did not make the keepers' task easier, for his was the sole responsibility of forwarding supplies on to the garrisons and ensuring that they did not fall through inadequate supply. In addition, he would also be expected to make good any losses of victuals if there was no satisfactory reason for this. Supply by sea brought the risks of loss or spoilage.⁴² By examining the accounts of Robert Tonge, who was keeper at Berwick between 1335 and 1338, we can gain a good understanding of the system of garrison supply.⁴³ The accounts show that after 1337 Robert relied for his supplies on merchants appointed by the king. Goods flowing into Berwick predominantly by sea were then allocated to the garrisons of Bamburgh, Edinburgh, Stirling,

³⁸ *Ibid.*, roll nos, 1 and 2. This enormous amount of victuals was also probably intended as food supplies for the 2,000 men-at-arms (or armed men), 4,000 archers and 4,000 spearmen also noted in the document (*ibid.*, no. 5) thus bringing the total of personnel to be fed to 14,050.

³⁹ E101/20/9, m. 5.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, m. 2.

⁴¹ A detailed though at times somewhat contradictory account of the role of the receiver of Berwick, and of Berwick's importance in the victualling process can be found in B. L. Atkinson, 'Berwick Upon Tweed in the wars of Edward III' (unpublished MA thesis, University of Leeds, 1959), Chapter 7. The overall importance of Berwick is analysed by C. Candy, 'The Scottish wars of Edward III', pp. 194–201.

⁴² For an example of this, see CPR, 1345–48, p. 543.

⁴³ Tonge occupied the office of receiver at Berwick, Newcastle and Bamburgh simultaneously and he accounted separately for each post at the Exchequer. See B. L. Atkinson, 'Berwick Upon Tweed', pp. 110–11.

Roxburgh and Perth.⁴⁴ By examining Tonge's accounts we can see the importance of his work. Between 30 September 1336 and 29 September 1337, Tonge had oversight of 3,115 quarters of wheat, 226 quarters of fish, 575 salmon, 2,746 quarters of oats, 886 tuns 21 pipes of wine, 418 quarters of malt, 455 tuns 4 pipes 8 quarters of flour, over 5,000 boards de *escland*, 2,028 horse shoes, 7,400 nails and various other iron implements.⁴⁵ From Berwick, Tonge shipped these out on thirty-six ships from both local and more distant ports to the garrisons at Edinburgh, Stirling, Bamburgh and Perth. Berwick ships not surprisingly played an important part in this traffic.⁴⁶ Although it has been suggested that the role of ships in supplying Scottish garrisons was not as easy as it was to supply Welsh castles the important strongholds of Edinburgh, Stirling, Perth and Bamburgh could easily be supplied by sea.⁴⁷

Piecing together the methods employed for supplying armies on the continent is more problematic than those used in Scotland. The latter operation has been more fully researched and is easier to understand, owing to the fact that in Scotland the English crown appointed a receiver of victuals who produced a vast amount of documentary evidence that can be used to reconstruct the northern supply operations. Nevertheless, it has usually been suggested that armies campaigning in France during this period mainly lived off the land.⁴⁸ This view is generally taken because it is argued that the quantities of provisions required by large armies, such as those of 1346 and 1359–60, could not have been transported over with the troops. Neither could the soldiers, when on active campaigns or *chevauchées*, have been burdened by slow and cumbersome

⁴⁴ For example, in March 1340 Thomas Melcheburn forwarded 1,000 quarters of wheat to Berwick at 7s 6d per quarter, and 1,000 quarters of oats at 4s. per quarter. In the following year Thomas and his brother William Melcheburn contributed a further 500 quarters of wheat, 500 quarters of malt, 10 tuns of wine, 100 quarters of salt and 7 quarters of oats. A further 200 quarters of salt and 7 quarters of beans and peas were later sent by them. All these supplies were freighted by sea. See E101/22/24; E101/23/2.

⁴⁵ E101/20/4, mm. 1–11.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, mm. 2, 3, 7, 8, 9. In fact there are 40 ships separately listed, but the *Katerine* of Berwick, commanded by Hugh Caldecotes, made three separate voyages as did the *Holygost* of Berwick, and the *Katerine* of Berwick commanded by John Bisshop carried out two voyages. Other ships came from thirteen ports all located on the northeast and east coasts, with the largest contribution coming from the ports of the Humber estuary, which supplied five ships, followed by King's Lynn with three ships.

⁴⁷ On castle supply, see M. Prestwich, 'The victualling of castles', *Soldiers, nobles and gentlemen: essays in honour of Maurice Keen*, ed. P. Coss and C. Tyreman (Woodbridge, 2009), pp. 169–82, p. 172.

⁴⁸ M. Prestwich, *Armies and warfare*, pp. 253, 259–61; S. J. Burley, 'The victualling of Calais, 1347–65', p. 49; M. McKisack, *The fourteenth century, 1307–1399* (Oxford, 1959), p. 242; H. J. Hewitt, *The Black Prince's expedition of 1355–1357* (Yorkshire, 2004), pp. 27, 46; T. J. Runyan, 'Naval logistics in the middle ages', p. 91; C. J. Rogers, *War cruel and sharp*, p. 310.

baggage trains.⁴⁹ Yet, many of the campaigns conducted by the English in France operated in the summer months when the autumn harvest would not be ripe.⁵⁰ This last issue probably explains why, when in France, English forces usually attacked towns. It was in the towns that the invaders expected to find large stores of foodstuffs. Indeed, the newsletters from the 1342 Brittany campaign and the accounts written during and after the 1346 Crècy expedition, show the importance that English commanders placed on taking towns while on the march, even at the risk of incurring heavy casualties.⁵¹ Even then there was no guarantee that the supplies within would be found or secured from the ravages of uncontrolled looting or burning.⁵²

The view that armies relied for supplies on the lands they passed through has recently been challenged on two grounds. First, it has been suggested that the daily calorific intake of a soldier could be much less than has previously been thought. Prestwich has calculated that seventy-four men would require 93 quarters of wheat for 176 days.⁵³ A quarter being 384lbs, these men would consume 35,712lbs of wheat in the allotted time that would have meant that each man roughly ate 2.7lbs of bread per day, which amounts to around 5,000 calories per

⁴⁹ J. Masschaele, 'Transport costs', pp. 270, 277 has suggested that a packhorse could carry four bushels of wheat, a bushel weighing 48 lbs., and travel up to twenty-nine miles per day. Therefore, an army's progress need not be slowed down by the need for carts.

⁵⁰ This could be of great importance. In 1812 when Napoleon invaded Russia some of his forces began feeding their horses un-ripened cereal crops, which resulted in thousands of horses dying of colic, as Dumoncau, one of Napoleon's officers, noted 'if the barley is fed to them and they drink water, the barley swells up and causes violent colics, which lead to death'. See P. B. Austin, *1812, Napoleon's invasion of Russia* (London, 2000), p. 58. Thus great care for the horses' victuals, at least, was required when campaigning on foreign soil during the summer months.

⁵¹ *Avesbury*, pp. 340–42, contains a newsletter written by the king to the council in England, which clearly shows that in 1342 the English concentrated on taking towns. Also, see *The life and campaigns of the Black Prince*, ed. R. Barber (Woodbridge, 1986), pp. 15–16, which records the letter written by Michael Northburgh detailing the early events of the Crècy campaign and which provides clear evidence that the English sacked several towns for the supplies that were stored there.

⁵² See, for example, A. Ayton, P. Preston, *The battle of Crècy*, pp. 66–67, which notes the problems that could ensue if discipline in the army disintegrated when a town was taken. Note particularly the sack of Carentan in which the English attack destroyed much of the stores.

⁵³ M. Prestwich, 'Victualling estimates for English garrisons in Scotland during the early fourteenth century', *EHR* 82 (1967), pp. 536–43, pp. 536–37. Prestwich has recently slightly updated his figures relating to the weight of a quarter and he now suggests that a weight of 424 lbs seems more reliable. However he does still argue that the daily calorific intake would be similar regardless, see M. Prestwich, 'Victualling castles'. This would make a bushel 53lbs. D. S. Bachrach, 'Military logistics', p. 430 makes the suggestion that a quarter was 504 modern pounds. If this latter figure is indeed true then the length of time the supplies would last for as noted in this book should, perhaps be extended by anywhere up a month.

day for each man.⁵⁴ Recently it has been suggested that this high intake should be reduced to 3,250 calories per man per day.⁵⁵ In this same period a Venetian galley man would consume 4,000 calories per day, which also suggest that fighting men in the fourteenth-century would consume between 3,500 and 4,000 calories per day.⁵⁶ What also needs to be noted, especially with regard to garrison supply, is that not much is understood about the numbers of garrison troops. If the troops were of knightly stock, or from junior branches of knightly families or the gentry class, a servant was likely to have accompanied them. Therefore, the men-at-arms who appear on a garrison's muster roll would not be indicative of the actual number of men who required feeding from the food supplies. In fact the seventy-four men in Prestwich's calculations could have actually numbered over 100. Indeed, a garrison at Edinburgh in 1300 was manned by a total of 347 men of whom only 154 were fighting men, and the non-combatant staff at garrisons could number many individuals including brewers, cooks, bowyers, boys, glaziers, drapers, woodmongers, falconers, clerks, millers, washerwomen, chaplains, heralds, water carriers and bakers.⁵⁷

It has also recently been argued that Edward III's campaigns in France did not rely on foraging for their supplies, and that the force of 1359–60, which numbered around 10,000 men, was fed for ten weeks solely from a large baggage train. It is calculated that 937 to 1,000 one-ton carts of cereals would last an army

⁵⁴ This calculation is also supported by several studies of medieval households, showing that a household servant employed by a lord was usually provided with roughly the same quantity of food. M. Prestwich allocates to garrison troops in the reign of Edward I: some two to three pounds of bread and a gallon of ale per day. See C. M. Woolgar, *The great household in late medieval England* (London, 1999), pp. 132–33. In addition, the bakers of the royal household were also expected to purchase a quarter of corn from which they were required to bake forty superior simnels, 140–50 salt simnels, and 260 bakers' loaves. A superior simnel would feed four men, the salt simnel would feed two and one loaf would be sufficient for one man. See C. Given-Wilson, *The royal household and the king's affinity*, p. 4. This suggests that a quarter of grain could feed up to 270 men. Indeed a bushel of wheat would normally provide thirty loaves and with nine bushels to a quarter then it can be inferred that one quarter of wheat could produce 270 loaves, see *idem*, 'Purveyance for the royal household, 1362–1413', *BIHR* 56 (1983), pp. 145–63, p. 152. Based on M. Prestwich's further calculations (*Armies and warfare*, p. 248) it is possible to suggest that 10,000 men would require roughly 5,000 quarters of cereals per week or 15,000 per month. However, it should be borne in mind that the inclusion of meat would reduce the demand for such heavy consumption of cereals. But with the inclusion of horses the weekly consumption could be further increased: it is estimated that 10,000 horses would require some 4,000 quarters per week. Furthermore, if we accept that the magnates supplied themselves, at least initially, then the duration of provender would last a month or so more.

⁵⁵ Y. N. Harari, 'Strategy and supply in fourteenth century western European invasion campaigns', *JMH* 64 (April, 2000), pp. 297–333, p. 303.

⁵⁶ F. C. Lane, 'Diet and wages of seamen in the early fourteenth century', in *Venice and history: the collected papers of F. C. Lane* (Baltimore, 1966), pp. 263–68.

⁵⁷ See D. Cornell, 'English castle garrisons', pp. 3, 74–75, who notes that 'in reality there was a much larger supporting cast whose purpose it was to support the garrison'.

of 15,000 men fifty days.⁵⁸ These figures are entirely plausible and it is worth noting that when carts were transported by sea they were likely to have been dismantled, so as to take less space in the hold, and would have been relatively easy to re-construct at the disembarkation point. That English medieval armies did indeed bring supplies with them can also be deduced from the orders issued by Henry V in 1415 when he told the sheriff of Hampshire to proclaim that, 'every lord, knight, esquire, valet and all others going with the king' was to bring with him on the campaign enough victuals for three months.⁵⁹ And if we look further, the evidence of armies foraging for victuals in the Tudor campaigns in France has been described as 'scanty': 'The enemy's territory never seems to have been the staple support of English armies at this period'.⁶⁰

Second, account must be taken of the meat carcasses that were undoubtedly transported with the armies. In 1294, along with grain and flour, Edward I shipped 1,537 sheep, 430 cattle, 210 bacons, 4,565 stockfish, 807 salmon, 253 conger eels, 3,774 birds and 23,700 eggs, to Gascony for his planned campaign there.⁶¹ Such quantities of meat would ensure that the grain supplies would last longer. Moreover, bearing in mind that the fleets raised by Edward III were much larger than those of his grandfather, it would clearly have been possible for large amounts of foodstuffs to be transported to France in the 1340s and 1350s. It should also be noted that not all of Edward III's continental campaigns required large amounts of supplies to be transported with the troops. For example, in 1338–40 the first two campaigns in the Low Countries were launched from allied territory with the option of local purchase, and it is not surprising to find that Edward's stay in Flanders has been described as 'an economic bonanza for the Low Countries, not only for the many Low Countries princes, but also for the bourgeois of the towns, for the church, and even for the common labourers, peasants, and the poor'.⁶² This is borne out by the fact that Edward's own household expended £2,063 3s 5d on supplies.⁶³ Furthermore, the 1342 Brittany expedition, much like the 1338–40 campaigns, was conducted with a relatively small number of English

⁵⁸ Y. N. Harari, 'Strategy and supply', p. 314. There are several views on what a medieval cart could carry but estimates vary between 1,000 pounds to half a ton. Wagons, it has been argued, could hold up to one ton. On carts and wagons, see A. C. Leighton, *Transport and communication in early medieval Europe, 500–1100* (New York, 1972), p. 72; M. Girault, *Attelages et charriens au moyen âge* (Paris, 1992), p. 138; J. Masschaele, 'Transport costs', pp. 268–69; D. S. Bachrach, 'Military logistics', pp. 431–32.

⁵⁹ J. Barker, *Agincourt: the king, the campaign, the battle* (London, 2005), p. 101; A. Curry, *Agincourt: a new history* (Stroud, 2005), p. 68.

⁶⁰ C. S. L. Davies, 'The provisions for armies', p. 236.

⁶¹ M. K. Vaughn, "'Mount the warhorse, take your lance in your grip ...': Logistical preparations for the Gascon campaign of 1294', pp. 97–111, see pp. 99–111.

⁶² B. Lyon, 'The dividends from the war in the Low Countries', *Peasants and townsmen in medieval Europe*, ed. J. M. Duvoisquel and E. Theon (published on the De Re Militari website, 1995), pp. 693–705, pp. 694, 698.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

soldiers. In the Low Countries campaigns some 4,500 English troops fought, while in 1342 the Brittany army numbered roughly 3,800 men who operated in an area that was increasingly under English control with direct access to several towns and ports. Thus the supply demands of such campaigns were not as great as those of the expeditions of 1346 and 1359–60.⁶⁴

Of course it could be argued that all these supplies were transported only for those campaigns in which the English expected to conduct sieges. This can be discounted for two reasons. First, it was natural that at some point during any expedition a siege of some kind would have to be conducted; that was the business of medieval warfare. Nevertheless, as the 1346 expedition showed apart from the siege of Calais, French towns were sacked with haste and no lengthy sieges were undertaken. Although Caen was attacked and captured the time this took was, by medieval standards, quick.⁶⁵ Second, it is now widely recognised by historians that Edward's campaigns in France sought the strategic outcome of a battle.⁶⁶ So in order to achieve this goal it was vital for Edward to be able to keep his army in the field long enough to force this outcome. In short English armies preferred not to remain static, a strategy that meant they had little time for foraging. This does not mean that the English were not unaware of the dangers that could surround logistical operations, and during the siege of Cambrai in 1339 Edward had witnessed how lack of adequate supplies could bring about an army's slow disintegration. Therefore, in order to keep his forces in good shape long enough to force Philip into action, Edward had to ensure that his soldiers brought enough supplies to see them through a two-month campaign. To rely on the local countryside in France to support his army was to undermine his battle-seeking strategy squandering the resources invested in preparing the campaign. Considering this it is inconceivable that Edward would not have brought sufficient provisions with him to get his through the first eight weeks of a campaign, even if this involved reduced rations. And he could also replenish his supplies through the sack of towns while on the march.

The discussion above has examined the methods available to the administrative officials of the period for collecting, storing, distributing and freighting supplies from the towns, villages and counties of England to both garrisons and armies in the field. We have also seen how these victuals were recorded and paid for, and we have scrutinised the work of the officials who were in charge of the system. The following analysis will expand on this to discover how such

⁶⁴ For the size of the English contingents in the Low Countries, see A. Ayton, 'Edward III and the English aristocracy at the beginning of the hundred years war' p. 179 and p. 181 for Brittany.

⁶⁵ Caen was taken in less than two days, see *Avesbury*, pp. 358–60; *Murimuth*, p. 203.

⁶⁶ For example, C. J. Rogers, *War cruel and sharp*; A. Ayton and P. Preston, *The battle of Crécy*; S. Morillo, 'Battle seeking: the contexts and limits of Vegetian strategy', *JMMH* 1 (Woodbridge, 2001), ed. B.S. Bachrach, C. J. Rogers and K. DeVries, pp. 21–41. In this article Morillo weighs up the arguments for the battle seeking approach.

clerical and organisational expertise was employed to exploit the maritime resources of the kingdom in relation to the supply fleets and naval armadas that were deployed in the wars against Scotland. The discussion will be divided into three parts. The first section will concentrate on the military expeditions to Scotland in the period between 1322 and 1336. These years witnessed the most intensive campaigns conducted by the English against their northern neighbour with the added potential to compare the effectiveness of the procedures used during Edward II's last campaign in 1322 and Edward III's first expeditions. This approach will reveal the scale of each operation and the character of the deployment of English sea power against Scotland throughout this period. In the second part we will concentrate on the period between 1337 and 1359 during which there was a vast reduction in English involvement in Scotland. The third and final section will examine the logistics of the English campaigns in France, which more than took up any slack left by the scaling down of the Scottish war. Indeed, the continental expeditions placed new and ever increasing demands on the English merchant fleet. The main aim is to show by quantitative analysis the central role played by the maritime communities in transporting victuals in all of the royal campaigns. Within the context of the logistics an evaluation of the 'military naval role' of shipping in the wars of Scotland will also be assessed.

The Supply of Armies and the Naval War in Scotland, 1322–1336

As noted above, the campaigns conducted in Scotland by the English crown between 1322 and 1336 brought a renewed period of military intensity, ending the relative lull after 1314. The role performed by the English merchant fleet was central to every expedition undertaken during this time. As such the degree to which the crown could exploit its naval resources through fleet raising mechanisms had a significant bearing on the outcomes of the campaigns. Broadly speaking, vessels operating in the Scottish wars were utilised in two ways: they were either employed as supply ships or fighting vessels. Neither of these roles should be underestimated. In 1322 no fewer than 101 ships, manned by 4,000 mariners, freighted to Newcastle and Skinburness several thousand quarters of various supplies.⁶⁷ Large though it was this contribution was dwarfed by the 183 vessels that were deployed in more offensive naval capacities. The sources show that throughout 1322 the English merchant fleet provided 284 ships, contributed by eighty ports and manned by 10,000 mariners.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ See BL, Stowe 553, fols 76v, 77r–77v; E101/15/36, mm. 1, 2; E101/16/1; E101/16/6, mm. 1–4; E101/16/7, mm. 1–11; E101/16/8, mm. 1–3; E101/16/20; E101/16/21, mm. 1–7; *Bain*, no. 766, p. 142; *Calendar of inquisitions miscellaneous*, II, no. 1088, p. 269; CCR, 1318–23, pp. 591, 640–1, 660–1; CPR, 1321–24, pp. 14, 77, 86, 90, 107, 109–10, 114, 134, 204, 205, 207, 288; CCR, 1318–23 pp. 463; M. Prestwich, 'Military logistics', pp. 278–88.

⁶⁸ BL, Stowe MS 553, fols 76r, 76v, 77r; E101/15/36, m. 2; E101/16/7, mm. 9, 10, 11; E101/16/8,

The first campaign of Edward III in 1327 ended in complete frustration, and ultimately failure, as far as Edward was concerned. Whether or not we accept the argument that the Weardale campaign was a planned farce, a fake show of strength, in order to come to a reasonable peace settlement with Bruce, or that it simply failed because the English had not yet developed a more mobile method of conducting a campaign, the results are the same.⁶⁹ In either case we are concerned with the preparations that were made to supply the English army and the overall maritime contribution to this process. The size of the English army on this expedition, and therefore the numbers of troops to be fed is difficult to establish.⁷⁰ Jean le Bel states that the English had 37,000 men in the field of which 7,000 were men-at-arms.⁷¹ This seems implausible, but a reasonable estimation of the foreign contingents can be made at between 500 and 780 Hainaulters, all men-at-arms. To this should be added the contingent brought by the bishop of Ely that totalled 173 men-at-arms.⁷² If we accept le Bel's estimate that the king's division, which would have included Mortimer, numbered around 600 men-at-arms we can suggest a total of around 1,500 men-at-arms.⁷³ Indeed, the overall force could well have been larger as the majority of the other magnates, except the earl of Oxford, were present on this campaign and performed their feudal service.⁷⁴ Considering that this was the first royal led campaign of the new reign it would be reasonable to expect that the size of the army was somewhere between those forces engaged on the 1322 and 1335 campaigns, so perhaps anywhere up to 10,000 men.

Fortunately, there are some Exchequer accounts that have direct relevance to the expedition, and by examining them we can gauge how successful the crown

mm. 2, 3; E101/16/16, m. 6; E101/16/20; E101/16/21, mm. 8–10; CCR, 1318–23, pp. 462, 463, 534, 540, 546, 547, 553, 559; CPR, 1321–24, pp. 14, 77, 86, 90, 102, 107, 109–10, 114, 134, 204, 205, 207; *Foedera*, II, i, p. 485; *Cal. Inq. Misc.*, II, 1307–1349, no. 1088, p. 269; *Bain*, no. 766, p. 142, which provides evidence that the king had his medicine transported by sea. It is assumed that the Cinque Ports supplied the ships they were ordered to and that the twenty-two ports (CCR, 1318–23, p. 553) requested to contribute ships for the transportation of the Irish troops did so at the rate of one vessels per port. The number of mariners involved in the 1322 expedition is to some extent an estimation, as many of the ships in this campaign served for no pay and we are therefore not given their crew sizes. However, the vessels recorded in the Wardrobe accounts do have crew sizes attached to them so the average crew size of forty-two mariners per ship has been applied across the board.

⁶⁹ I. Mortimer, *The greatest traitor: the life of Roger Mortimer, first earl of March, ruler of England, 1327–30* (London, 2003), p. 178. Mortimer suggests that Roger had planned the campaign in this way as part of some pre-arranged deal with the Scots, whom he met while he was exiled in France prior to his successful invasion in 1326.

⁷⁰ The best analysis of the army can be found in N. B. Lewis, 'English Feudal Levy'.

⁷¹ Le Bel, in Rogers, p. 8.

⁷² R. Nicholson, *Edward III and the Scots*, p. 20; N. B. Lewis, 'English feudal levy', p. 238, n. 9.

⁷³ Le Bel, in Rogers, p. 4.

⁷⁴ N. B. Lewis, 'The English feudal levy', p. 247.

was at organising its supplies.⁷⁵ Utilizing these accounts, it is possible to say that a total of 4,688 quarters of wheat, 1,438 quarters of oats, 378 quarters of malt, 3,760 small salts, 728 bacons, 16 barrels of sturgeon, 4,000 horse shoes and 80,000 nails were collected.⁷⁶ These victuals were mainly gathered from the counties of Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk, but the nails and the horseshoes were sourced from Wales, and these were transported in at least six ships.⁷⁷ Moreover, orders issued before the campaign suggest the gathering of a further 500 quarters of wheat, 2,200 quarters of oats, 1,000 quarters of barley, 900 quarters of beans and peas, 100 quarters of salt, 140 bacons, 200 horse shoes and 300 nails.⁷⁸ This seems reasonable because the Exchequer evidence does not include any victuals from the counties of Derbyshire or Nottinghamshire, and these counties, based on evidence from other campaigns, would have almost certainly provided some supplies.

The above list does not include those victuals that the merchants were ordered to forward to Newcastle. Again, Exchequer evidence is lacking, so we have to rely mainly on the details contained in the calendared records. In May protections were issued to twelve merchants and their ships for the purpose of transporting supplies to Newcastle.⁷⁹ In addition, the bishop of Ely provided his retinue with foodstuffs freighted in three ships.⁸⁰ There was also more than one ship provided by Richard Gilian from the port of Ferriby, but unfortunately we are not given

⁷⁵ E101/18/2; E101/18/8; E101/18/10.

⁷⁶ E101/18/2, mm. 2–4; E101/18/8.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, Thomas Springet commanded one of the ships: the other five are not named. This account is badly damaged and over half the account is missing.

⁷⁸ The Scottish Rolls contain two separate orders for supplies issued before the start of the expedition to the same counties. The quantities of victuals finally collected are calculated by subtracting the quantities of supplies demanded in the first order with those requested in the second set of orders. It has been presumed that the difference in the quantities demanded from the first order to the second set of orders, which were mainly reductions, had indeed been collected. In total 6,500 quarters of wheat, 4,200 quarters of oats, 1,100 quarters of beans and peas, 1,200 quarters of barley, 700 quarters of salt, 440 bacons, 6,000 horse shoes and 3,600 nails, were demanded from Lincolnshire, Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Norfolk and Suffolk, see *Rot. Scot.* I, pp. 206–7, 215, 220, 221.

⁷⁹ CPR, 1327–30, pp. 104, 108. Of these twelve vessels five were from Great Yarmouth (the *Blithe*, owned by Stephen de Catefeld; the *Nicholas*, owned by Thomas Sidher; the *Rose* owned by John de Fordele; the *Edmund*, owned by Robert de Drayton and a ship of Bartholomew de Thorp); the port of London provided two (the *Marie*, commanded by Andrew Rosekyn, and the *Seintemaribot*, commanded by Adam Frenche); two were contributed by the town of Heacham (a ship of Simon Lambright and a ship of Geoffrey Gruggen). This port was recorded in the accounts as Hecham. However, it is likely that this was the town of Heacham, which is just south of King's Lynn; one ship came from Nottingham (Hugh Dammeson and William Amyas supplied this ship); one was supplied by the port of King's Lynn (the *Peter*, commanded by Thomas de Melcheburn).

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 141. The ships were the *Torkesay*, commanded by Robert de Stayburn; the *Kele*, commanded by William le Wayte, and the *Flundres*, commanded by Robert del Bate.

precise numbers.⁸¹ If we include the three vessels supplied by the bishop of Ely for his retinue, and the six from the Exchequer evidence, then the total number of visible ships is twenty-one, with the suggestion that the actual total could have been as high as thirty. Already there is a stark difference between this campaign and the 1322 expedition. Indeed, the evidence shows that Mortimer and his advisors produced a pitifully small number of vessels to convey the collected supplies. Even if we allow for a further twenty ships, which would have freighted the victuals from the counties in the initial orders, the total falls far short of adequate planning.

Taking all the above evidence together a theoretical assessment of the total collected supplies would be between 10,000–12,000 quarters of cereals, 900 bacons and close to 4,000 small salts, these being transported in thirty ships. If it were to be assumed that an army of 10,000 men would consume some 15,000 quarters of cereals per month, the amount of food estimated to have been collected in 1327 would have supplied an army of this size for roughly one to two months.⁸² But whether the evidence entirely supports le Bel's statement that the food ran out during the second confrontation with the Scots has to be reassessed. For instance, after the campaign was concluded John de Charleton, receiver of victuals at Newcastle, sold off various foodstuffs including wine, flour, oats and salt.⁸³ This means there was a surplus of provender left after the expedition, which points to the fact that the main problem lay with the management of the distribution of victuals from Newcastle to the army. All of this suggests that the English had not yet come to terms with the problem of supplying highly mobile forces. Indeed, the same logistical failings that had ended Edward II's expedition in 1322 seem to have beset Edward III's campaign in 1327. In short the real problem lay within the system of distribution from the depots to the army in the field.

Was the failure in 1327 of the administration in raising an adequate supply fleet mirrored by the crown's attempts to put to sea an armada of ships capable of providing sufficient naval cover for the land army? Evidence for the naval contingent of the 1327 campaign is mainly contained in the records of the Chancery, and therefore, open to interpretation. Nevertheless, it is possible to create a picture of the potential size of the naval dimension of the expedition. General

⁸¹ E101/18/19, m. 10, shows that two ships freighted 8.5 barrels of sturgeon and 1 pipe of wine from Newcastle to York, in early September 1328, the voyage was described as being 'on the king's business'. Whether these were some of the ships supplied previously by Richard Gilian is however doubtful, as they are recorded as coming from Roucliff and York. The ships were the *Blithe* of York, commanded by William Gregor, and a ship of John Bekeman.

⁸² With the inclusion of fodder for horses the available victuals for the men would be decreased. But it is also worth bearing in mind that some magnates, such as the bishop of Ely, seem to have been supplying their own men.

⁸³ E101/18/10, nos. 2–19. For example he sold 40 tuns of salt to John Scot fitz Rich, Nicholas de Carhale and Robert Haliwell (no. 2); and he sold one tun of flour to Robert Acton, *ibid.*, no. 7.

arrest orders for ships were issued on 6 May when nine ports were asked to contribute fourteen vessels over 60 tons well armed and manned *dupplici eskippamento*, to be ready within a week.⁸⁴ The service expected of these vessels' crews was described as *servitium debitum*, which suggests these ships were to serve at their home ports' expense and would therefore be absent from any payroll.⁸⁵ In addition the Cinque Ports were also ordered to provide vessels.⁸⁶ If we assume therefore that the Cinque Ports did provide their full quota and the above nine ports contributed fourteen ships, then so far, the crown would have raised seventy-one vessels manned by roughly 1,500 mariners. Added to this can be the thirty ships' crews that were paid wages by Nicholas Acton and a further thirty-two vessels arrested from the ports of Devonshire.⁸⁷ If we include the victualling ships in this total we can say that a possible 154 vessels took part in this campaign, supplied by thirty-six ports with the majority of these (52.7%) situated on the east coast. The number of mariners is difficult to establish with any accuracy, but if we use the average from the Acton account then there could have been as many as 2,000–2,500.⁸⁸ The evidence seems to suggest, therefore, that Mortimer and Isabella put to sea an adequate fleet of ships to provide sufficient naval cover. However, closer inspection of the Acton account reveals that the thirty ships recorded on this document only served from 3 to 26 June. This was an incredibly short time and it would have meant that the ships completed their service before the land campaign began. Already there is a stark difference between this campaign and that of the 1322 expedition. Table 2.1 compares the numbers of ships deployed in the last Scottish expedition of Edward II with those employed in the first Scottish campaign conducted by his son.

Table 2.1 Numbers of ships that served in Edward II's last Scottish campaign and Edward III's first Scottish expedition

Campaign	Ships	Mariners	Ports
1322	284	10,000	80
1327	154	2,500	31

Note: The mariner numbers in 1322 and 1327 are estimations based on the averages we have from accounts that detail crew sizes.

⁸⁴ *Rot. Scot.* I, pp. 209–10; *CPR*, 1327–30, pp. 104, 108.

⁸⁵ *Rot. Scot.* I, p. 210. In addition, more orders were issued on 7 May for forty ships of 60 tons or over to be requisitioned from the Thames to Great Yarmouth.

⁸⁶ *Foedera*, II, ii, p. 703; *Rot. Scot.* I, p. 212.

⁸⁷ E101/18/3. The ships recorded by Acton served from 3 to 26 June and were manned by 1,067 mariners. E101/17/35 lists the ships from Devonshire.

⁸⁸ This number of mariners is calculated from the crew sizes of 93 ships. In addition, because the Cinque Ports' full quota is a known entity an additional 1,197 was added to the totals gained from the 93 ships.

What the above discussion shows is that although the majority of the English nobility participated in Edward III's first campaign the maritime resources that Mortimer and Isabella concentrated against Scotland were not of the same magnitude as the 1322 expedition. Yet in many ways 1327 could be considered an anomaly because of the political situation and it was to be a further six years before Edward, now free from his mother's control, would intervene directly in Scottish affairs when he fought the Scots at Halidon Hill. Did this campaign mark a new chapter in the way Edward projected his maritime resources, and his logistical organisation, against the Scots? Unfortunately, the 1333 expedition is also lacking in extant payroll material. Nevertheless, there are a few surviving sources that relate to the supply of victuals and illuminate some of the types and quantities of foodstuffs amassed for the campaign.⁸⁹

Orders were first issued on 20 March 1333 for the collection and transportation of victuals from seventeen counties.⁹⁰ This was followed on 9 April with a more substantial request for foodstuffs from fifteen counties, the port of Great Yarmouth and Ireland.⁹¹ In June, when the siege was in full flow, six of these counties were still being asked for supplies. These latter demands were for the same amounts of provender as the previous orders, which suggests that collection had been slow. In total, 13,100 quarters 3 bushels of wheat, 15,660 quarters 50 bushels of oats, 5,500 quarters of beans and peas, 1,600 bacons, 1,200 quarters of salt, 200 tuns of cider and 30 lasts of herrings were requested. Furthermore, the merchant Manentius Francis was requested to purvey 22,100 quarters of oats and 15,600 quarters of wheat, 4,000 quarters of beans and peas and 2,000 bacons.⁹² Whether the amount of victuals that Manentius was to collect was supposed to include those that the previous orders had demanded is not clear, but on balance it is likely that these were separate orders. In addition to the supply requests, orders for the arrest of sufficient numbers of ships were issued at the same time and protections for mariners were enrolled.⁹³

The above orders give the impression that this campaign was to be of the same magnitude as Edward II's last Scottish expedition. Indeed, Gilbert de Halghton, receiver of victuals at Newcastle, records a total of 3,341 quarters 4 bushels of wheat, 2,221 quarters 6 bushels of oats, 365 quarters 9 bushels of beans and peas,

⁸⁹ It is not the purpose of this survey to analyse in detail the events of the siege and the battle of Halidon Hill. The best and most detailed accounts of the campaign can be found in the following works: R. Nicholson, *Edward III and the Scots*, Chapter 9; J. Sumption, *Trial by Battle*, Chapter 5; C. J. Rogers, *War cruel and sharp*, Chapter 4; B. Webster, 'Scotland without a king, 1329–1341', *Medieval Scotland: crown, lordship and community*, ed. A. Grant and K. J. Stringer (Edinburgh, 1998), pp. 223–36; M. Strickland and R. Hardy, *The great warbow: from Hastings to the Mary Rose* (Stroud, 2005), pp. 186–89; C. Candy, 'The Scottish wars of Edward III', Chapter 4.

⁹⁰ *Foedera*, II, ii, p. 855.

⁹¹ *Rot. Scot.* I, pp. 227–30.

⁹² *CPR*, 1330–40, p. 409.

⁹³ *Rot. Scot.* I, p. 226; *CPR*, 1330–34, p. 410.

163 tuns of flour, 48 tuns of wine, 2,715 horse shoes and 25,200 nails, which were supplied by nine counties and Manentius Francis.⁹⁴ In addition, William de la Pole supplied English forces with £244 worth of supplies and 60 casks of flour, and his brother, Richard, forwarded 477 tuns of wine, with a further 7 tuns 14 parts and 1 pipe of wine being supplied by other merchants.⁹⁵ Moreover, Robert de Wolsthorp and John de Melton contributed £340 12s 6d worth of provender from Lancashire and Gloucestershire.⁹⁶ Allowing for the same price paid per quarter of wheat by Manentius Francis (5s 5d), the £584 12s 6d worth of supplies could have amounted to a further 2,000–2,500 quarters of wheat.⁹⁷ Thus, the total amount of wheat collected and transported north for the siege was probably between 5,300 and 5,500 quarters, with the quantity of flour reaching 163 tuns and 60 casks. But it is also worth noting that the Scots, on this occasion, did not carry out a scorched earth policy. In fact English troops were able to sack the market at Haddington and take away large quantities of foodstuffs.⁹⁸

The role that ships played in the transport of these victuals was central to the success of the siege. However, the evidence relating to the maritime logistical operation is uneven in quality. For example, in some cases, the numbers, and names, of the ships are not recorded with accuracy and only a payment for the costs of freightage has been entered on an account.⁹⁹ This being said the evidence does show that in 1333 Edward III understood the value of naval power and accordingly he raised a fleet that rivalled his father's in 1322. Indeed, including the supply ships Edward put to sea an armada numbering 228 vessels of which 138 were solely used for prosecuting the naval blockade of Berwick.¹⁰⁰ Given that

⁹⁴ E101/18/31, mm. 1–5.

⁹⁵ BL, Add MS 35181, fols 3v, 10v.

⁹⁶ E372/177, mm. 52, 52d; *Cal. Inq. Misc.*, II, p. 365, no. 1496. This probably includes the £44 3s 1d recorded in BL, Add MS 35181, fol. 3v.

⁹⁷ E101/18/28, m. 1, lists the prices paid by Manentius Francis. The expenses of £13 16s he incurred while collecting these victuals is recorded on E101/18/29. On the first of his accounts (E101/18/28) he records the collection of 1,502 quarters of wheat, 1,022 quarters of oats and 406 quarters of beans and peas, which are probably the supplies recorded by Gilbert de Halghton in E101/18/31, m. 1, and which were freighted in eight ships by Manentius to Newcastle. The difference between the amount of beans and peas (41 quarters and 9 bushels) in the two accounts probably reflects the damage caused to some of the victuals while being transported by sea, therefore, Halghton only received 356 quarters and 9 bushels out of 465 quarters. The difficulty of reconciling these accounts was also noted by R. Nicholson, *Edward III and the Scots*, p. 114, n. 6.

⁹⁸ *Melsa*, II, p. 368.

⁹⁹ J. Masschaele, 'Transport costs', pp. 267–8 also notes the problems of accurately assessing the amounts of victuals procured when the surviving Exchequer accounts only contain lump sum amounts as opposed to those particulars containing itemised expenses.

¹⁰⁰ E101/18/28; E101/18/31; E101/18/36; E372/180, m. 47; CCR, 1330–34, p. 410; CCR, 1333–37, p. 22, 25, 99; *Rot. Scot.* I, pp. 225, 226, 232, 233, 234, 248–49, provide details of the ships arrested for service in 1333. In total the orders issued in early 1333 to the sixty-three ports and the Cinque Ports called for the requisitioning of 141 ships. Considering that most ports were

such a large mobilisation of England's maritime resources was directly employed against Berwick, it would have been almost impossible for Scottish forces to break the siege. As long as Edward kept his army well supplied the landward approach would have been cut-off from any substantial relief force, and with over 200 ships at sea Edward also made sure that no assistance could come from the seaward side. Table 2.2 and Table 2.3 make comparisons between Edward II's last Scottish venture and his sons first two expeditions north of the border.

Table 2.2 Comparisons between the total numbers of ships serving in 1322, 1327 and 1333

Campaign	Ships	Mariners	Southern fleet	Northern fleet
1322	284	10,000	131	153
1327	154	2,500	74	80
1333	228	5,000	137	91

Table 2.3 Comparisons of victuals collected between the Scottish campaign of Edward II in 1322 with those of Edward III in 1327 and 1333

Year	Cereals	Flour	Salt	Fish	Meat	Wine
1322	16,407	1,007	—	1,800	532	1,745
1327	11,104	—	3,760	16	868	—
1333	7,886	223	—	—	—	532

Note: The cereals are in quarters; of the flour 160 is in tuns, while the rest was measured in casks. The wine is measured in tuns. The section headed cereals includes wheat, oats, barley and what are named as mixed cereals in the sources. The meat includes beef, bacon and muttons. Although the wine is in tuns a further 47 pipes 1 barrel from the 1322 expedition should be added. The salt is described as small salt in the sources and the fish includes herrings and 16 barrels of sturgeon.

*

asked only to supply small numbers of ships it has been taken that these ports did contribute the numbers of vessels they were requested to. In addition it is also worth bearing in mind that the total amount paid in wages to soldiers and sailors during this campaign came to the large sum of £5,629, which suggests that a sizeable naval force was raised, see A. E. Prince, 'Army and navy', in *The English government at work, 1327–1366*, ed. J. Willard and W. A. Morris (Cambridge, Mass., 1940), p. 350. Finally, it is also known that on 26 June the English fleet also participated in the siege by assaulting the seaward side of Berwick, which suggests that a large English fleet was operating in local waters, see *Melsa*, II, p. 368; *Bridlington*, pp. 111–12. Indeed, by early June Edward III had already issued £6,000 for men, supplies, ships and siege engines, which shows that both the naval and land-based operations were on a large scale, see A. G. Beam, 'The political ambitions and influences of the Balliol dynasty, c. 1210–1364' (unpublished PhD thesis, Stirling 2006), p. 332.

By 1333, therefore, the above tables reveal that Edward III began to exploit his maritime resources on similar scale to that of his father. However, what Table 2.3 highlights is that the collection of supplies was more or less of the same magnitude throughout all three Scottish expeditions.¹⁰¹ The main point, therefore, brought out by the tables is the extent to which both kings were able to exploit the merchant marine. In the case of Edward III his first expedition in 1327 failed to raise significant numbers of vessels. Nevertheless, by 1333 when he had taken full control of the government Edward III was raising fleets on a scale similar to his father in 1322. Did this trend continue between 1334 and 1336 over the next three military incursions into Scotland by Edward III?

Unfortunately for Edward the success of the 1333 expedition could not be exploited the following year, and his winter campaign of 1334–35 was one of complete frustration. The expedition was originally planned for early October but did not get underway until over a month later. Owing to recruitment problems, Edward's forces were small compared to the numbers of men that he had had under him at the siege of Berwick and the battle of Halidon Hill. During this time Edward became increasingly angry and frustrated over this lack of commitment to his call to arms. Even the extra bonus of allowing each man, who appeared at the muster, the right to keep all the goods he could plunder did not help to raise sufficient numbers of troops. All told, Edward's army probably numbered 4,000 men, but desertion was endemic and the county levies had fallen far short of their expected contributions.¹⁰²

The failure to raise a sufficient number of men is mirrored by the size of the supply fleet that Edward's officials managed to put to sea during this campaign. We occasionally catch a glimpse of a ship involved in the supply operation, such as the *Katerine* of King's Lynn, commanded by Richard Blackeneye, which carried 180 quarters of wheat in the dying moments of the campaign in February 1335,¹⁰³ and we also know that some vessels were sent direct to Henry Beaumont at Dundarg.¹⁰⁴ But no concrete numbers of vessels involved in the supply operation can be gleaned from the available sources.

The naval dimension of the campaign is more fully evidenced through an examination of the Wardrobe accounts that record the payments made to the ships' crews who served between November 1334 and February 1335. These records show that wages were paid to the crews of nine ships manned by 372 mariners, including the masters and constables. Apart from two vessels that were

¹⁰¹ Although the amount of victuals collected for the siege of Berwick in 1333 does not compare favourably to the quantities that were amassed for the 1322 expedition, it should be borne in mind that at its greatest extent the force of 1333 probably numbered 10,000 men. As such the supplies collected in 1333 were proportionally of the same magnitude as those gathered for the 20,000 men in 1322.

¹⁰² R. Nicholson, *Edward III and the Scots*, p. 181.

¹⁰³ E101/19/2, m. 4.

¹⁰⁴ C. Candy, 'The Scottish wars of Edward III', p. 92.

owned by the king these ships were contributed by ports that were all located on the east coast of England.¹⁰⁵ If we include the ten ships requisitioned on 1 February by James Kingston and John Crabbe, in addition to six more vessels arrested from the southwest ports, it would seem that the maritime contingent numbered twenty-five individual ships.¹⁰⁶ This would have been a great disappointment to Edward because during the expedition he had ordered his clerks to search sixty-nine ports.¹⁰⁷ But this is not surprising because, as already noted, the winter weather was extremely harsh and it would have been difficult for many ships from the south-western ports to negotiate the passage in time.¹⁰⁸ In fact, we must suspect that the orders for ships issued in December and January were actually for the intended blockade of Scotland during the spring and summer of 1335: that is, that the orders issued in the dying days of the Roxburgh campaign were in fact meant for the expedition that was to be launched in the summer of 1335.

Although 1334 was a recruitment failure it can in many ways be seen as an anomalous winter campaign. This is shown by the fact that in the following year Edward III mustered the largest invasion force he ever entered Scotland with. By the start of the expedition Edward had raised between 13,000 and 13,500 soldiers.¹⁰⁹ The importance of the forthcoming invasion is also shown by the preparations to collect sufficient victuals. For example, the first orders were issued on 31 March to sixteen counties to collect foodstuffs at specified prices, and demands for supplies were continually issued through the months of April to July.¹¹⁰ Indeed, the orders for foodstuffs continued even when the army had been

¹⁰⁵ BL, Cotton MS, Nero C.VIII, fol. 264r.

¹⁰⁶ E372/180, mm. 43, 44; *Rot. Scot.* I, pp. 317, 320–21.

¹⁰⁷ Apart from eight ships, two of which were the king's, the ports situated on the east coast provided all the vessels that served in this campaign.

¹⁰⁸ *Bridlington*, p. 120 provides a vivid description of the appalling weather during the campaign.

¹⁰⁹ R. Nicholson, *Edward III and the Scots*, p. 200. Nicholson points out that although 15,000 men probably served during the campaign this was not all at the same time, so he estimates that the optimum strength of the army was somewhere between 13,000–13,500 men.

¹¹⁰ The following references provide details of the orders that were issued to collect victuals: the prices were 5s for a quarter of wheat, 3s for a quarter of beans and peas and 2s per quarter of oats. *Rot. Scot.* I, pp. 333–35, 337, 344, 369, 370; R. Nicholson, *Edward III and the Scots*, p. 205. The Exchequer evidence relating to the supplies can be found in: E101/18/35, pp. 2–16, 2d–16d; E101/19/2, mm. 1–4; E101/19/3, mm. 1–8; E101/19/6; E101/19/9; E101/19/25; *CPR*, 1334–38, p. 98. Some of these victuals could have been used for the Roxburgh campaign because E101/19/3 runs from 29 September 1334 to 29 September 1335. However, it is probable that most of the supplies on this account were collected during and after the 1334–5 winter campaign, with the majority of the victuals being consumed in the summer of 1335. What adds weight to this interpretation is that in 1334 the king complained that his forces were short of victuals. In fact, it was probably the weather that prevented victuals reaching the king in 1334–5.

in the field for some time. During August the counties of Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Nottinghamshire, Surrey, Sussex, Essex, Dorset, Somerset, Cornwall, Devon, Gloucestershire, and Hampshire, were requested to find supplies and ship them to Berwick and Perth.¹¹¹ In addition, the sheriff of Lincoln was to provide a further 40 tuns of salt and 300 quarters of oats and forward them to Berwick.¹¹²

The thoroughness with which Edward gathered supplies echoed enthusiasm when it came to requisitioning ships to serve in both a supply and naval role. Orders were first issued for vessels to be arrested on 16 May 1335, when Edmund de Grimsby was told to requisition ships in the port of Bristol.¹¹³ On 20 May similar writs were sent to John de Percebrigg, in which he was ordered to gather ships from the Cinque Ports, Sussex and London.¹¹⁴ By 6 June two ships of Liverpool were already at sea searching for a French vessel carrying arms and supplies to Dumbarton castle.¹¹⁵ The search for shipping was increased and throughout June and July ships were ordered to be requisitioned from Newcastle, Hartlepool, Hull, Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Hampshire, Dorset, Devon, Cornwall, Somerset and the Cinque Ports.¹¹⁶

If we evaluate the evidence from the Exchequer and Chancery sources we can see that, with the supply ships included, the crown successfully raised 189 ships for this campaign, with the ports from the south and west supplying nearly two thirds (61%) of all the ships.¹¹⁷ There could have been as many as 6,000 mariners manning these vessels, which cost the crown approximately £2,500.¹¹⁸ This raises new questions about the mobilisation of men for the campaign of 1335, for if we were to combine the mariners with the land-based troops, then it would seem that Edward's administration managed to recruit, and put into action, roughly 20,000 men for this campaign. Moreover, a general grasp of maritime strategy was also in evidence throughout the expedition and this was actively pursued. For example, for three months the castle of Dumbarton, which was the hub of Scottish resistance, was under constant blockade by English ships.¹¹⁹

¹¹¹ Rot. Scot. I, p. 370.

¹¹² Ibid., p. 369.

¹¹³ CCR, 1333–37, p. 397.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 414.

¹¹⁶ Rot. Scot. I, pp. 351, 354, 355, 356, 357, 359, 362, 363, 365, 369, 371, 374, 379.

¹¹⁷ The evidence for the ships is gained from: E101/19/10; E101/19/11; E101/19/12; E101/19/14, mm. 2–7d; E101/19/15, m. 2; E101/19/16, mm. 3–4; E101/19/22, mm. 1–3, 6d; E372/179, m. 43; E372/180, mm. 44, 50; BL Cotton MS, Nero C.VIII, fols 264r–265v; CCR, 1333–37, pp. 397, 414, 431; Rot. Scot. I, pp. 351, 354, 355, 356, 357, 359, 362, 363, 365, 369, 371, 374, 379.

¹¹⁸ This is an estimate because the victual ships are not given crew numbers, and pay details are rarely recorded.

¹¹⁹ E372/180, m. 50. The ship involved was the *Trinite* of Southampton, commanded by Adam Brian. The vessel was crewed by 1 constable, and 48 mariners at a cost of £33 16s. Brian's

The following campaign of 1336 was never going to be of the same magnitude as the previous expedition and in many ways this invasion marked the end of sustained campaigning by Edward north of the border (thereafter Edward occasionally intervened in Scotland, for example, in 1337, 1341 and 1356). This latter change in strategy is evidenced by the fact that at this stage of the northern war, apart from his Lochindorb *chevauchée*, Edward started to place control of the war under high-ranking nobles such as Henry of Grosmont. By 1336 the essentials of the supply lines were already continually functioning. As such, requests to William Melcheburn for foodstuffs had been issued as early as 13 February 1336, when he was asked to supply Berwick with 1,000 quarters of wheat and 1,000 quarters of oats.¹²⁰ In the same month the castle of Cupar was to receive 10 tuns of flour, 10 tuns of wine and 10 cauldrons of sea coal, with the added proviso that all the wheat was to be ground into flour before transportation.¹²¹ After this order no more demands for provender were issued until 12 July, the day Edward set out on his *chevauchée*, and this request was for only 40 tuns of wine, 60 quarters of oats, 24 bacons, and 2,000 horseshoes to be brought from Bristol in two ships.¹²² In fact, between 11 May 1336 and 6 April 1337, Richard de Tibay, custodian of victuals at Carlisle, only had charge of 119 quarters 6 bushels of wheat, 7 tuns of flour and 119 tuns of wine. The above evidence relating to the 1336 expedition shows, therefore, that the demands for victuals were not of the same magnitude as those issued for previous campaigns. But this does not mean that Edward ignored his own supply needs in 1336. On 17 July the receiver at Newcastle forwarded 300 quarters of peas to Aberdeen, in an obviously pre-arranged plan with the king to meet his forces in the vicinity of the town during his *chevauchée*.¹²³

From this time forward the general trend was that the organisation, collection and distribution of supplies were now mainly placed in the hands of several merchants. Most prominent among them were Thomas and William Melcheburn of King's Lynn. Between July and August 1336 they collected and shipped to Berwick 2,978 quarters of wheat at 7s per quarter, 3,090 quarters of oats at 4s a quarter, 1,000 quarters of mixed cereals, 278 quarters of beans, 384 tuns of flour

more detailed particulars are recorded on E101/19/30; he began his service on 1 September and arrived back at Bristol on 26 November.

¹²⁰ Rot. Scot. I, p. 409.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid., p. 436.

¹²³ E101/19/16, m. 4. Edward actually arrived in the Aberdeen area around 21 July, so this ship if it was sent on 17 July could well have met the king on the coast. Peas would have been used for pottage and would not have required the same amount of preparation for cooking that flour or wheat would. For the dates of the campaign, see C. J. Rogers, *The wars of Edward III*, pp. 48–50 especially p. 49.

and 384 quarters of malt.¹²⁴ By examining the surviving Exchequer accounts relating to the collection and shipment of supplies we can arrive at a good estimate as to the numbers of ships involved in the 1336 campaign. For instance, the Melcheburn's procured the services of thirteen ships, all from ports situated on the east coast, seven of which came from King's Lynn. In addition, the receiver at Newcastle utilised the services of six vessels while another nine were employed elsewhere in the supply operations. In all thirty identifiable ships were employed in a supply role for this campaign.¹²⁵

The naval contingent was also much reduced in 1336, but again by analysing the available sources we can gain a better understanding of just how much Edward had begun to tire of his Scottish project. Orders were first issued for the arrest of ships on 8 February 1336 when James Kingston was to requisition vessels over forty tuns, all fully manned, victualled and armed, from Faversham to the north.¹²⁶ On 20 February further demands for the collection of ships were sent to William Weredale and Ambrose de Newburgh, who were to visit ports north of the Thames, and Ralph Willingham who was to search the ports south of the Thames.¹²⁷ Furthermore, by 3 May William de Emeldon was requisitioning vessels in the ports of Newcastle, Hartlepool and Berwick.¹²⁸ In the previous month of March a series of requests for ships had been sent directly to individuals such as Stephen de Padiham of Winchelsea, who was expected to contribute his ships, the *Cog Thomas* and *Cog Andreu*, for military service by Easter, and during April four barges were ordered to patrol the sea around Dumbarton castle.¹²⁹ An order, issued on 28 June, demanded that the ships of North Wales were to put to sea under the supervision of the earl of Arundel.¹³⁰ In the months of August and September requests for more ships were constantly issued and on 18 August the ships of Ireland were told to go against the Scots, while six days later all available vessels in Cornwall were to be put to sea. At the same time Roger Conduit, mayor of London, was to contribute three further

¹²⁴ E101/19/30; E101/19/32. In total Thomas and William used thirteen ships to transport these supplies. For example, Thomas freighted 180 quarters of wheat and 237 quarters of the oats the *Godyer* of King's Lynn, commanded by Walter Brekeheved.

¹²⁵ King's Lynn contributed the majority of ships with their compliment of eight vessels. The *Mariote* from the Isle of Wight was also involved in the supply operation when during November it transported victuals to Scotland, in addition to the *Rose* of King's Lynn, commanded by John Brancaster, which in April freighted stockfish to the forces of Scotland. Two further ships from Bristol and two vessels from Ireland were also involved, see *CPR*, 1334–38, pp. 247, 333; *Rot. Scot.* I, pp. 436, 437. The evidence for the supplies is recorded in: E101/19/30; E101/19/32; E101/19/33; E101/19/34; E101/20/2; E101/20/4; E101/20/7, m. 1.

¹²⁶ *CCR*, 1333–37, p. 544.

¹²⁷ *Rot. Scot.* I, p. 403.

¹²⁸ *CCR*, 1333–37, p. 573.

¹²⁹ *Rot. Scot.* I, p. 414, 417, 651.

¹³⁰ *CCR*, 1333–37, p. 593; *Rot. Scot.* I, p. 435.

ships fully manned, armed and supplied.¹³¹ By 6 October a large flotilla of ships was ordered to be at Portsmouth and be ready to sail. No doubt this demand was issued because of the large French fleet at anchor in the ports of Normandy.¹³²

How many ships did these orders actually produce? The Wardrobe book of Richard Ferriby records the wages paid to the crews of twenty-one individual ships.¹³³ Fourteen of these served throughout June, July and August, but three of them had been in active service from March.¹³⁴ The service which these ships were to undertake was described as an 'expedition of war' and all were to sail to Perth.¹³⁵ The king's vessels, the *Rodecog*, commanded by Hugh Reppes, and the *Seinte John*, also commanded by Reppes, had been in service from May.¹³⁶ In addition, Thomas Roscelyn employed eight vessels to transport himself and the garrison force under his command from King's Lynn to Dunnotar.¹³⁷ The total number of mariners recorded through the Exchequer as receiving wages was 355, although only seven ships are actually provided with full crew compliments.¹³⁸ The evidence therefore seems to show that the naval contingent in 1336 was not

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 442, 446, 447. These three ships probably relate to the £86 10s given by London to provide ships for the king, see *Calendar of letter books of the city of London, letter book f*, p. 5.

¹³² *Rot. Scot.* I, pp. 467–68. In total sixty-three ports received orders to contribute ships, of which twenty-nine were situated north of the Thames and thirty-four south and west of the Thames.

¹³³ BL, Cotton MS, Nero C.VIII, fols 265v, 266r, 266v. Four ships are not accorded any masters or crew but were sent by Robert Tonge with 42 men-at-arms and 99 archers: the *Holygost* of Berwick; the *Flemynge*; the *Mayln* of Grimsby and the *Cristiane* of Blackeneye. No doubt the ship the *Holygost* was the same vessel that was recorded on Tonge's victual account of 1336–37 (E101/20/4, m. 8) and commanded by John Hardarrage.

¹³⁴ John Houlot, master of the *Ceale* of Hull; William Broun, master of the *Leonard* of Hull; Thomas Nesbit, master of the *Nicholas* of Hartlepool. Hugh Reppes, master of the king's ship the *Rodecog* had served from May, although Reppes had been on almost continual service throughout 1334–36.

¹³⁵ Ten ports, with eight of these located north of the Thames, and two south and west of the Thames, supplied these vessels. The largest contributor was the port of Hull, which provided five (23.8%) vessels to the fleet, followed by Grimsby and Newcastle, which each supplied two (9.5%) ships.

¹³⁶ The *Rodecog* had a crew of 1 constable and 38 mariners and Reppes served as its master until 31 October 1335 and then from 1 November 1335 for a further 120 days, before he changed to the *St John*, see BL, Cotton MS, Nero C.VIII, fols 264r, 265v.

¹³⁷ C. Candy, 'The Scottish wars of Edward III', p. 255.

¹³⁸ BL, Cotton MS, Nero C.VIII, fol. 266r. There is also a much more detailed and larger payroll of the ships that served in the western fleet, as recorded by John de Watenhul (E101/19/38, mm. 1–12) on behalf of Bartholomew Burghersh. This account runs from 3 October 1336 to 10 November 1337. However, all the ships in this account served only in 1337 and were no doubt involved in guarding the coast from the French fleet at anchor in Normandy and also in the preparations for the king's intended passage to Flanders in that year. However, the largest single ship was the *Webalchbot*, commanded by Adam Cogger, which was manned by 120 mariners and 1 constable and served from 24 August to 10 November and cost the crown £126 8s.

as large as it had been over the previous campaigns; indeed it probably numbered some thirty-eight ships. This was due in large part to Edward's continental troubles, but by then he must also have begun to realise that Edward Balliol was incapable of pushing home the advantage that the victories of Dupplin Moor and Halidon Hill had provided him with. Consequently, as direct royal intervention on a grand scale drifted away from the Scottish theatre of operations so too did the resources of England. The following table clearly highlights the peaks and troughs of English logistical operations in the Scottish expeditions by showing the numbers of ships that sailed in each campaign.

Table 2.4 Numbers of ships involved in all the Scottish campaigns between 1322 and 1336

Campaign	Ships	Mariners	Southern fleet	Northern fleet
1322	284	10,000	131	153
1327	154	2,500	74	80
1333	228	5,000	137	91
1334	25	372	8	17
1335	189	6,000	118	71
1336	73	335	25	48

Maritime Logistics and the Naval War in Scotland, 1337–1360

The last section has analysed the evidence relating to the supply of victuals by sea and the naval service of ships during a series of royal led campaigns. We now turn to the issue of maritime supply and the naval war during the years when direct royal intervention was lacking (except in 1341 and 1356 for short periods), and when the direction of the war in Scotland passed to the king's lieutenants. These commanders indented with the king to serve with a retinue alongside other forces provided by the crown in Scotland, or on the marches. Initially in 1336 Henry of Grosmont, earl of Derby had undertaken this duty before Thomas Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, took over in 1337. But even these high-ranking nobles were gradually drawn to the more prestigious campaigns in France, and from 1338–60 Scotland was usually left to the care of Henry Percy, Thomas Lucy and Edward Balliol.¹³⁹

An examination of the *Rotuli Scotiae* throughout the period 1337–60 reveals a dramatic decline in orders for the large quantities of supplies that were required for the expeditions between 1333 and 1335. True, the campaigns in 1337 and 1338 were accompanied by demands for large amounts of victuals, but generally, after

¹³⁹ For a lucid discussion of the arrangements made with Grosmont and Warwick, see N. B. Lewis, 'The recruitment and organisation of a contract army, May to November 1337', *BIHR* 37 (1964), pp. 1–19.

1338, the orders issued from the Chancery were concerned with the supply of garrisons. This is evidenced by that fact that in 1337 the only significant order that was issued was for Hull to fit out thirty ships capable of carrying victuals to the army under the command of the earl of Warwick.¹⁴⁰ In the following year, however, there was a sizeable military operation outside Dunbar castle and although this siege ended in failure detailed arrangements were made for the supply of the English army, both in terms of foodstuffs and military equipment.¹⁴¹ For example, a siege engine was transported to Dunbar on 10 December 1337 in the *Coggeship* of Southampton and this vessel was employed to freight a new engine to replace the one previously sent on board the *Katherine* of Middleburgh, which had been lost at sea.¹⁴²

But after the eventful year of 1338 the victual arrangements for Scotland begin to fall into a distinct pattern. Apart from an initial demand in 1339 for 2,100 quarters of wheat, 600 quarters of oats and 250 stockfish, the main focus of that year was the ongoing operation to keep the existing English garrisons well supplied.¹⁴³ In particular, the English forces at Perth dominate these orders. In early 1339 requests for wine to be sent to Perth were issued to the receiver at Berwick; and on 9 March merchants were encouraged to forward supplies there by sea, while during April, York and Hull were told to freight 500 quarters of wheat, 300 quarters flour, 380 quarters of barley and 540 quarters of peas to the garrison. Robert Tonge, the receiver of victuals at Berwick, usually managed the supply operation and most of the vessels that were employed in a logistical role were recorded through his accounts. For example, in 1337 Robert employed the services of thirty-six ships to freight victuals from Berwick to the outlying English garrisons. Of these, seventeen were dispatched to Edinburgh, ten to Perth and two to Bamburgh castle.¹⁴⁴ On 19 February 1337 Tonge also employed one small boat to conduct foot soldiers from Berwick to Perth.¹⁴⁵ But the numbers of ships involved in the transportation of victuals from 1337 to 1360 was not of the same magnitude as the earlier campaigns. Using the available evidence it is possible to suggest that sixty-two individual ships took part in the supply operations during

¹⁴⁰ *Rot. Scot.* I, p. 494.

¹⁴¹ For the details of this army, see A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, p. 172. But also, see J. Sumption, *Trial by battle*, pp. 236–37 and C. J. Rogers, *War cruel and sharp*, pp. 151–52. Both these accounts provide details of the actual events at the siege. For the victual arrangements in 1337 and 1338, see E101/20/4; E101/20/32; E101/21/2; E101/21/24, nos. 6, 7, 8–18, 20, 21, 26–53, 55–58, 67–73.

¹⁴² *CPR*, 1334–38, p. 559. Sixty mariners manned this vessel. However, the king still issued a payment of £50 to the owner for compensation, see *CCR*, 1341–43, p. 186.

¹⁴³ *Rot. Scot.* I, pp. 558–89. The orders after 1338 were usually for small amounts of supplies to be sent to the outlying English garrisons such as Edinburgh and Roxburgh, and for small quantities to be sent to Berwick, see *Rot. Scot.* I, pp. 581–83, 586, 589, 619, 639, 700, 715.

¹⁴⁴ E101/20/4, mm. 7–9.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, m. 10.

these years, and that apart from one ship from London and one from Bristol, ports located on the eastern coast of England contributed all of these vessels.¹⁴⁶

The naval role of ships during this period was also much reduced, when compared with the numbers of vessels that had been put into operation during the previous years. This partly reflected Edward's change of strategic focus. This was especially the case after the French had diverted their Mediterranean 'crusade' fleet to the Norman ports. This French armada posed a direct threat to English shipping and the southern ports of Edward's realm. However, Scotland was not completely neglected and using all the available sources it is possible to say that a total of thirty-two ships operated in a military role during the northern campaigns in the years from 1337 to 1360.¹⁴⁷ The numbers of mariners that served on these vessels is difficult to establish and although some of the ships are provided with crew numbers these are quite high, presumably because these vessels operated in a naval capacity.¹⁴⁸ But if we use the average of thirty mariners per ship then a rough estimate of the number of serving seamen would be in the region of 1,300 to 1,500.¹⁴⁹

Taking all this evidence together it is possible to say that in the period 1337–60 ninety-four confirmed ships took part in supply and naval operations relating to Scotland. Table 2.5 and Table 2.6 record the quantities of supplies collected for each expedition and the numbers of ships involved in all the Scottish campaigns. The evidence contained in these two tables clearly show the periods of the greatest military intensity as compared to the times when the logistical effort began to decline. However, it would be a mistake to assume that the naval war in the north after 1336 was totally neglected and the English crown, at times, would ensure that there was a proactive naval presence. For example, from 8 June to 15 August 1338 the ship *Gracedieu* of King's Lynn, a large vessel manned fifty mariners with forty men-at-arms and forty archers on board, was at sea pursuing Scottish pirates and other Scottish ships.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ E101/20/4, mm. 7–9; *Rot. Scot.* I, p. 530; CCR, 1337–39, pp. 27, 199, 216, 229; CCR, 1341–43, pp. 186, 205; CCR, 1343–46, p. 407; CPR, 1345–48, p. 152; CPR, 1348–50, p. 452; CPR, 1358–61, p. 27.

¹⁴⁷ E101/20/28; E101/20/34; E101/22/24; E101/22/36; *Rot. Scot.* I, pp. 483, 485, 521; CCR, 1337–39, pp. 194, 197, 251; *Foedera*, II, ii, p. 1082; CPR, 1343–45, p. 555; CCR, 1346–49, pp. 132–33. Eighteen (56.2%) of these vessels came from ports located on the east coast, four (12.5%) were ships taken as prizes of war and re-used by the English, one was foreign, one was contributed by Southampton and eight (25%) are not specifically linked to any port of origin.

¹⁴⁸ The *Gracedieu* of King's Lynn, for example, had fifty mariners on board, see E101/20/28. Crew sizes are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

¹⁴⁹ On crew sizes, see below pp. 265–73.

¹⁵⁰ The ship was commanded by Thomas Robyn, see E101/20/28, mm. 1–2.

Table 2.5 Quantities of victuals collected for use in each expedition, 1322–1360

Year	Cereals (qtr)	Flour (tuns)	Salt (qtr)	Fish (tuns)	Meat (carcases)	Wine (tuns)
1322	16,407	—	—	1,800	532	1,745
1327	11,104	—	3,760	16	868	—
1333	7,886	223	—	—	—	532
1334	5,199	72	—	—	—	75
1335	13,370	652	427	10,995	—	273
1336	7,320	169	137	—	—	196
1337–60	26,479	595	273	—	—	923

Table 2.6 Numbers of ships involved in individual operations throughout the Scottish campaigns, 1322–1360

Campaign	Ships	Mariners	Southern Fleet	Northern Fleet
1322	284	10,000	131	153
1327	154	2,500	74	80
1333	228	5,000	137	91
1334	25	372	8	17
1335	189	6,000	118	71
1336	73	335	25	48
1337–60	96	3,000	8	88

Note: This table does not include all the ships that operated in the Scottish wars. It only contains those that can be placed within specific expeditions. See Table 2.7 for the total numbers of vessels engaged in the campaigns in Scotland

The evidence tabulated above shows quite clearly that the invasions of 1333 and 1335 were the apogee of Edward III's expeditions to Scotland.¹⁵¹ The evidence relating to 1334 and 1336, for example, shows that although the quantities of the collected supplies were not much reduced from the years when the most intensive military actions took place, the size of the maritime dimension of the campaigns was markedly reduced.¹⁵² In fact the general trend is that from the expedition of 1322, when 284 ships participated in Edward II's invasion of Scotland, with further peaks in 1333 and 1335, we eventually see evidence of a decline in the deployment of English sea power against Scotland. Indeed, from 1337 only ninety-six ships served over a twenty-year period, and these were mainly drawn from the ports that were located closest to the main supply depot of

¹⁵¹ The Roxburgh campaign although sandwiched between the two large expeditions of 1333 and 1335 should be seen as an anomaly owing to the fact that this was a winter campaign conducted away from the coast in a particularly harsh winter with small numbers of land-based troops.

¹⁵² That the victuals collected for 1334 and 1336 would be reduced should not be a surprise considering the relative size of the armies of those years when compared to 1322 and 1335.

Berwick. Finally, the analysis shows that after 1338 the English government rarely committed itself to a major logistical effort north of the border. This is shown by the fact that the victuals that were collected in 1337 and 1338 amounted to forty-six percent of all the supplies that were sent to Scotland in the period 1337 to 1360.

From the above analysis six main points are brought out. First, when we take into account the relative size of the 1322 army, as compared with the forces recruited by Edward III, Table 2.5 reveals that by 1335 Edward III was exploiting the kingdom's agricultural resources on a scale above that of his father. Moreover, because the armies Edward III deployed were smaller but of a higher quality than his father's, the former did not require as many supply ships. Second, demands on the English merchant fleet was not reduced and, if anything, actually increased during the period 1337–60, as Edward III needed substantial armadas to transport his armies to the continent. For instance, if we take 1338 as an example we can immediately see the increased scale of Edward III's maritime operations. In that year eight ships operated in Scottish waters as supply, transport or fighting vessels, while Edward raised an armada of 403 ships in order to transport his army to Flanders.¹⁵³ Third, the numbers of English ships deployed against Scotland goes some way to address the argument that the Scots usually held the advantage in the maritime war during the period under consideration, and that Edward III failed, or was not willing, to commit all his power to the wars in Scotland.¹⁵⁴ Although the latter point may well be valid for the period after 1336, the overwhelming numerical superiority in ships employed by Edward II and Edward III surely favoured the Plantagenets rather than the Bruces in the naval war. It is true that the Scots preyed on English ships, but these were scattered examples of piracy against small numbers of supply vessels or trading ships making their way up the east coast. It must also be borne in mind that the English attacked Scottish shipping, in addition to devastating their port communities such as the burning of Aberdeen in 1336.¹⁵⁵

Fourth, the point recently made by historians that Edward III deployed no major fleet with the aim of forcing a battle in Scotland, and as a corollary did not understand the importance of naval warfare, is not supported by an examination of the sources.¹⁵⁶ The siege of Berwick in 1333 and the great offensive of 1335 saw

¹⁵³ For the Scottish ships, see CPR, 1338–40, p. 227; E101/20/34, m. 2; E101/20/39, no. 42. For the Flanders fleet, see below Chapter 3.

¹⁵⁴ C. Brown, *The second Scottish wars of independence, 1332–1363* (Stroud, 2002) pp. 48, 70. Brown states that the Scots usually had the advantage in naval affairs.

¹⁵⁵ For example, CCR, 1337–39, p. 172, which states 'order to deliver to William de Goseford, a ship called *La Cogg* of Flanders, which he took, and on which the bishop of Glasgow and other of the king's enemies were, certain being killed, as the king has given William that ship'. This was a great coup for Edward to catch such a prominent member of the Scottish nobility and shows that the English were also engaged in an aggressive maritime war.

¹⁵⁶ C. Brown, *The second Scottish war of independence*, p. 48 makes this point.

large numbers of English vessels being deployed with the primary purpose of destroying any Scottish ships they confronted, while also burning several Scottish harbours in order to prevent retaliation by the Bruce party.¹⁵⁷ Moreover, in 1333 a large English fleet was effectively deployed as part of the siege of Berwick, which did result in a battle. In fact the evidence seems to suggest that in most Scottish expeditions the English crown did the best it could, considering the relative poverty of maritime communication systems and technology, in trying to disrupt the Scottish resistance effort by attempting to intercept vessels that were sent to Scotland by her main allies. For example, in June 1335 two ships were sent on active service with orders to attack any ships bound for western Scotland.¹⁵⁸ In all the evidence points to the fact that in the period when the English king's attention was focused on Scotland the English crown would actively pursue both a naval war and, on the whole, a successful maritime logistical support operation, showing that the king and his advisors had a firm grasp for the need of a large naval dimension to any expedition north of the border.

Fifth, more recently it has also been suggested that the fleet south of the Thames was mainly deployed as a protection against possible French raids.¹⁵⁹ Although this was probably the case in some circumstances, it is unlikely to have been true during the periods of the major expeditions of 1333 and 1335. In fact by confining a large section of his maritime resources to the English Channel during his Scottish expeditions Edward III would in effect be diluting his naval strength at the point where it was (perhaps) most needed. That the French did send ships to aid Scotland in the wars is not doubted, but they did so only in small numbers and not until after 1336, when the breakdown of diplomatic relations between France and England and the redeployment of Philip VI's Mediterranean fleet to northern France posed a direct threat to Edward. It was this latter move in 1336 that provided the main impetus for change in the orientation of English sea power.

Finally, the analysis of the supply operations also allows some conclusions to be drawn. By comparing the amounts of victuals that were ordered during the preparations for a campaign with the quantities that were actually collected it can be seen that, on average, only fifty percent was usually successfully gathered. For example, in 1322 Edward II requested that a total amount of 34,300 quarters of wheat, oats, barley and beans and peas were to be collected. Yet the sources show that his officers managed to gather only 16,407 quarters of these supplies. Edward III's administrative officials fared no better and in 1334 and 1335 the crown ordered that 39,000 quarters of various crops be collected, but the clerks in charge of this operation only managed to gather 18,569 quarters. Yet, 1336 was a success with 7,320 quarters of various cereals being collected when only 5,300

¹⁵⁷ For a powerful rejection of the argument that Edward III was not a capable naval strategist, see G. R. Cushman, 'The lord of the sea', pp. 272–97.

¹⁵⁸ The ships were from Dartmouth and Liverpool, see CCR, 1333–37, p. 414; E101/15/9.

¹⁵⁹ C. Candy, 'The Scottish wars of Edward III', p. 245.

quarters had been ordered. The evidence also points to the fact that gradually after 1336, and certainly by 1338, the system was left entirely to private merchants, with no direct intervention from the government except in times when the king, or his friends, was personally involved in an expedition. In the period 1338–60 some 26,479 quarters of various supplies were collected when only 14,990 quarters had been ordered from the royal administration. Clearly the new victual operation involving private merchants was working quite successfully without government intervention. Indeed, one suspects that the enormous quantities of supplies that were ordered at the outset of a campaign was done so because the crown only expected to collect fifty percent of what was requested. Thus, in reality Edward II would never have hoped to actually collect 34,300 quarters in 1322 but in asking for this amount he probably expected his officials to at least gather 15,000 quarters. In all, the victual operation in Scotland during the period covered by this study should be viewed as a success. Even after direct government intervention ceased the whole system seems to have run relatively well in the hands of the receiver of victuals and the King's Lynn merchants.

In conclusion the above analysis shows that English kings had a firm grasp of maritime strategy. They employed ships to blockade important points of resistance, such as at the siege of Berwick in 1333 and at Dumbarton castle in 1334–35; they raised huge fleets to freight arms and supplies directly to the theatres of operations, and they deployed small flotillas of ships in a more aggressive role such as the burning of Scottish ports. That the English government's aim in this maritime war was not always achieved owes more to the nature of communicational difficulties and the enormous and complicated bureaucratic process required to get an armada to sea in sometimes un-seasonable conditions. In general the level of the maritime involvement in the Scottish wars between 1322 and 1360 should be viewed as a success. That Berwick would have been retaken in 1333 without naval support is questionable, and without a considerable maritime element all the invasions of these years would have been impossible. The following two tables highlight the whole logistical operation in the Scottish wars by showing the overall numbers of ships that were deployed and the total quantities of foodstuffs that were freighted.

Table 2.7 Total numbers of ships serving in the Scottish wars, 1322–60

Number of ships	1,141
Number of ports	98
Ships from south of Thames	513 (from 54 ports)
Ships from north of Thames	628 (from 44 ports)
Mariners	30,000

Sources: *Cal. Inq. Misc.*, II, 1307–1349, nos 683, 689, 1088, 1496, pp. 170–72, 269, 365; BL, Stowe MS 553, fols 76r–77v; BL, Add MS 35181, fols 3v, 10v; BL, Cotton MS, Nero C.VIII, fols 264r–266v; *Bain*, no. 766, p. 142; Calendar of letter books of the city of London, letter book f, p. 5; CCR, 1318–23, pp. 462, 463, 534, 540, 547, 553, 559, 591, 660–61; CCR, 1333–37, pp. 22, 25, 99, 194, 197,

251, 573, 651; CCR, 1337–39, pp. 27, 46, 199, 209, 216, 251 CPR, 1321–24, pp. 14, 77, 86, 90, 102, 107, 109–10, 114, 134, 204, 205, 207; CPR, 1327–30, pp. 104, 108, 141; CPR, 1330–34, p. 410; CPR, 1334–38, pp. 98, 247, 337; CPR, 1343–45, p. 555; CCR, 1346–49, pp. 132–33; *Foedera*, II, i, p. 485; *Foedera*, II, ii, pp. 703, 1082; E101/15/36; E101/16/1; E101/16/7; E101/16/8; E101/16/20; E101/16/21; E101/17/24; E101/17/35; E101/18/2; E101/18/3; E101/18/8; E101/18/10; E101/18/19; E101/18/28; E101/18/31; E101/18/32; E101/18/33, nos 14, 7–10; E101/18/34; E101/18/35; E101/18/36; E101/19/1; E101/19/2; E101/19/3; E101/19/6; E101/19/9; E101/19/10; E101/19/11; E101/19/12; E101/19/14; E101/19/15; E101/19/16; E101/19/25; E101/19/30; E101/19/32; E101/19/33; E101/19/34; E101/19/38; E101/20/2; E101/20/4; E101/20/7; E101/20/10; E101/20/13; E101/20/28; E101/20/32; E101/20/34; E101/21/2; E101/21/23; E101/21/24; E101/22/3; E101/22/24; E101/22/36; E101/23/2; E101/23/9; E101/23/15; E101/23/34; E101/23/26; E372/177, mm. 52, 52d; E372/179, m. 36, 41; E372/180, mm. 43, 44, 47; E372/184, m. 3d; *Rot. Scot.* I, pp. 206–07, 209–12, 215, 220–21; 225, 226, 232, 233, 234, 248–49, 286, 291, 294–97, 305, 309, 311–12, 320–21, 324–25, 414, 417, 435–37, 442, 446, 447, 467–68, 483, 485, 521–23, 530, 533–34, 558–60, 562, 564, 568, 569, 570, 576–77; R. Nicholson, *Edward III and the Scots*, pp. 121, 181; C. Candy, ‘The Scottish wars of Edward III’, p. 255.

Table 2.8 Total quantities of victuals shipped to Scotland, 1322–1360

Types of victuals	Quantities
Wheat (qtr)	40,190
Oats (qtr)	27,459
Beans and peas (qtr)	8,144
Malt (qtr)	3,463
Various cereals (qtr)	8,509
Flour (tuns)	1,711
Meat (carcasses)	1,400
Fish (tuns)	12,811
Wine and cider (tuns)	3,744
Salt (qtr)	4,597

The Supply of English Armies in France, 1324–1349

In the opening section of this chapter it was noted that the prevailing idea on how English armies supplied themselves, when campaigning on the continent, was that they usually relied on the local countryside, or the sack of a town, to keep themselves fed while on the march. But it was also recognised that recently this view has begun to be eroded as a better understanding emerges of the scale and scope of the organisational abilities of the Edwardian kings.¹⁶⁰ The following section will use four case studies relating to the campaigns conducted in Gascony (1324–49) and the Low Countries (1338–40), in order to show that, in most cases, the forces serving abroad under Edward II and Edward III transported large quantities of foodstuffs over with them, to such an extent, that living off

¹⁶⁰ The excellent study by R. A. Kaner, ‘The management and mobilisation of English armies’, Chapter 9, concludes with a positive assessment of the government’s abilities to organise complex logistical operations and achieve a high measure of success.

the land became simply a means of replenishing what supplies they had already brought over with them.

The St Sardos expedition of 1324 is one of the best-documented campaigns of the period. Although the evidence relating to the issue of victual shipments do not rival the pay details of the army and navy, they nevertheless, allow a good assessment of the quantities of supplies that were transported to Gascony with the army. The collection of foodstuffs for this campaign began in March 1324 and during this month Robert de Nottingham acquired supplies from the counties of Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire.¹⁶¹ Later in the year a further 1,470 quarters of wheat, 239 quarters of beans and peas, 21 quarters of oats, 88 beef carcasses, 131 bacons and 104 tuns of flour were shipped to Bordeaux in twenty-six ships. In addition to these victuals each ship also carried seven tuns of water for the requirements of the horses it transported.¹⁶² All of these vessels, except the *Blithe* from King's Lynn, commanded by Richard Erinyte, were from ports south and west of the Thames. A further 1,050 quarters of wheat, 630 quarters of beans, 216 quarters of oats, 7 bacons and 27 quarters of flour was transported in October 1324.¹⁶³ The final fleet to leave England and travel to Gascony in the spring of 1325 also carried with it a further 375 tuns of flour, 585 quarters 1 pipe of flour, 40 quarters of wheat and 20 quarters 3 bushels of beans and peas.¹⁶⁴ As well as the collection of foodstuffs the gathering of various types of arms was also underway and during the same period a total of 5,657 nails, 3,000 boards, 136 springalds with 8,170 quarrels and 329 extra cords, 100 large spikes, 250 middle spikes were freighted to the duchy in twelve ships contributed by ports situated on the east coast.¹⁶⁵ Added to these supplies can be other materials of war that were freighted in twenty-six ships from the southern admiralty in the summer of 1325, which amounted to enough wood for 20 bridges, 122 cords, 1,215 nails, 32 racks for horse fodder, 731 boards, 197 nets, and 182 *canenasta*.¹⁶⁶ Taken together a total of 2,560 quarters 5 bushels of wheat, 889 quarters 3 bushels of beans and peas, 237 quarters of oats, 479 tuns 612 quarters of flour, 88 beef carcasses and

¹⁶¹ E101/16/36. He claimed £18 4s for his expenses.

¹⁶² E101/16/35, mm. 1–2, 1d, 2d. A tun was 954 litres or 252 gallons as laid down by a statute of 1423. See G. Hutchinson, *Medieval ships and shipping*, p. 90 and B. Lavery, *Ship: 5,000 years of maritime adventure* (London, 2004), p. 44. It estimated that a horse would require 15 gallons a day depending on the temperature, see D. L. Smith, 'Muscovite logistics', p. 45.

¹⁶³ E101/17/4, mm. 1, 2, 2d.

¹⁶⁴ E101/16/40.

¹⁶⁵ E101/16/34, nos 1–17.

¹⁶⁶ The term *canenasta* is intriguing because this could be a form of early cannon or some form of gunpowder weapon. If this is the case then it is one of the earliest forms of this type of weapon. See R. D., Smith, 'Artillery and the hundred years war', in *Arms, armies and fortifications in the hundred years war*, ed. A. Curry and M. Hughes (Woodbridge, 1999), pp. 151–61, p. 151, which notes that the earliest reference to such weapons in Europe dates to 1326. Alternatively the term could be derived from the Latin word, *cannesta*, which is an ornamental head covering, and as such these could have been some form of protective headwear.

138 bacons were freighted to the duchy with the army in 1324–25. Even if we allow for the wastage of 1,000 quarters of the wheat there would still have been enough to keep 2,000 men supplied for close to two months.¹⁶⁷ The evidence relating to the precautions taken for the feeding of horses in this expedition is also important and in addition to soldiers it must also be assumed that some of the supplies collected were for their consumption. In fact horses could be large consumers of fodder with each one requiring some 24–32 pounds of feed a day.¹⁶⁸ Thus when discussing the quantities of victuals collected it should not be automatically assumed that these were solely for human consumption.

Similar precautions were taken when supplying armies going to Gascony in the 1330s and 40s. For example, before John de Norwich served in the duchy in 1337 he ensured he had enough supplies for himself and his retinue. As such, Stephen le Blount collected 1,415 quarters of wheat, 2,034 quarters of flour, 21 quarters 6 bushels of malt, 695 quarters of oats, 785 quarters of beans and peas, 28 beef carcasses, 319 bacons, 589 muttuns, 6,520 fish and 80 conger eels.¹⁶⁹ In the following year Norwich was sent a further 1,955 quarters of wheat, bought from 246 people at a cost of £400 13s 10d.¹⁷⁰ This large amount of foodstuffs was surely meant not only for Norwich's small retinue but also for the Gascons who served under him as Edward III's representative in the duchy.¹⁷¹

During the Gascon campaigns of 1345–49, initially led by Henry of Grosmont, the supply of the English forces in the duchy was a well-planned operation. At the outset of the expedition in 1345 Grosmont transported to the duchy 264 boards, 1,280 large beams, enough to construct 50 bridges, 20 springalds with 146 cords and 104 quarrels, 2,737 sheaves of arrows for bows, 1,000 caltrops, 1,000 *sanalshapps* and 45 *carbons*.¹⁷² In November of the following year 800 quarters of wheat and an un-quantified cargo of fish, along with other supplies, were taken to

¹⁶⁷ There is evidence from a letter written by Ralph Basset, John Wisham and Adam Lymbergh to Edward II that some of the victuals sent to the duchy arrived rotten and this resulted in civil unrest, however, this letter was written in early May 1325 so it must relate to the victuals sent for the forces already in the duchy, because the earl of Surrey did not set sail from England until 22 May 1325. See P. Chaplais, *The war of Saint-Sardos* (London, 1954), pp. 221–22.

¹⁶⁸ D. L. Smith, 'Muscovite logistics', p. 44. This weight would consist of half grain and half fodder.

¹⁶⁹ E101/20/30.

¹⁷⁰ E101/21/3.

¹⁷¹ Norwich's force is known from enrolled protections (C81/17/50, m. 33) and from an Exchequer account (E101/166/11, m. 19). Using these it is difficult to get an accurate picture of the total size of his retinue, however, an estimate as to its size can be gleaned from the £1818 13s owed to him by the Exchequer (CCR, 1337–39, p. 323; CCR, 1339–41, pp. 40, 321), by spending 65s a day on wages his force was likely to have consisted of 30 men-at-arms and 100 mounted archers.

¹⁷² E101/24/6.

Bordeaux in five ships.¹⁷³ In 1347, between May and June, a further 9,050 quarters of wheat, 200 quarters of rye and 400 quarters of beans and peas were freighted to the duchy in twenty-three ships, which except for eight, were all supplied by ports located on the east coast.¹⁷⁴ At the end of July, and throughout August and September, a further nine vessels from Hull and Newcastle transported 1,053 quarters of wheat.¹⁷⁵ And in the summer of 1348 an additional 149 quarters of wheat, 40 quarters of oats and 50 quarters of beans and peas were shipped to Bordeaux.¹⁷⁶ All the foodstuffs sent to Gascony in 1347 went at the request of Grosmont who was by that time participating in the siege of Calais. This was because Henry had left his most trusted retinue leader, Sir Thomas Cok, in charge of the Anglo-Gascon forces and he obviously felt obliged to make sure that Cok and his allies were supplied with provender from England.¹⁷⁷ Finally, the fact that in both 1324 and 1345 wood to construct bridges was transported also provides evidence of good planning. Aquitaine, and indeed much of France, was criss-crossed by large rivers. Grosmont was well prepared for river crossings, as his transportation of enough wood for 50 bridges highlights.

The king's campaigns in the Low Countries during 1338–40 were also well supplied with foodstuffs from England. Initially Edward had expected to cross over to Flanders in 1337 but this had been delayed. However, this cancellation did not stop the work of the purveyors and, as one chronicler noted, Edward's officers were extremely diligent in their business for this expedition.¹⁷⁸ For example, Reginald de Donington, clerk, searched the county of Lincolnshire and the area around Lindsey for foodstuffs. He traversed through 537 towns, manors, villis and abbeys and in total he collected £809 12s 8d worth of victuals.¹⁷⁹ By expending such a large amount of money Donington would have been able to purchase roughly 5,000 quarters of wheat.¹⁸⁰ Nevertheless, it was in the following

¹⁷³ CPR, 1345–48, pp. 198, 204, 206, 215. One ship came from Winchelsea, one from London, and the other three were all foreign vessels from Spain.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 218–20.

¹⁷⁵ E101/25/20, nos 10–15.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, nos, 5–9.

¹⁷⁷ Thomas Cok was retained as seneschal of Aquitaine from 1346 to 1349, see K. Fowler, *The king's lieutenant*, p. 301. However, Grosmont was back in Gascony at the end of 1349 and stayed in the duchy until 1351, so Grosmont could have used some of these supplies during his 1349 campaigns, see C. J. Rogers, *War cruel and sharp*, pp. 287, 294. Supplies could also be collected in Gascony through a system of corn rents on this, see E. C. Lodge, 'The constables of Bordeaux in the reign of Edward III', *EHR* 50 (1935), pp. 225–41, p. 226.

¹⁷⁸ *Knighton*, p. 7.

¹⁷⁹ E101/20/11, mm. 1–6.

¹⁸⁰ E101/21/40. This is based on the £32 6s 1d paid for 265 quarters 6 bushels of wheat by William Wallingford in 1339. Although it must be noted that the prices that were paid for wheat in the Scottish campaigns usually amounted to between 5s and 7s per quarter. Therefore, this amount of money could have bought only 3,200–3,500 quarters of wheat. Although during years when demand was heavy for wheat the price per quarter could increase dramatically.

two years that most of the activity for the collection of supplies occurred. From March to August 1338, William Dunstable, collected 347 quarters of wheat, 430 quarters of oats, 41 quarters of beans and peas, 9 quarters of malt, 92 quarters of salt, 110 muttons, 111 bacons, 1,287 horse shoes and 1,760 nails from the counties of Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Essex and Hertfordshire. All these victuals were taken to the ports of Great Yarmouth, Ipswich and King's Lynn to be transported to Flanders.¹⁸¹ In a second, but related account dated to the same period, Dunstable visited the same counties as above but this time he also gathered supplies from York, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. He managed to collect a further 578 quarters of wheat, 138 beef carcasses, 716 muttons, 204 bacons, 137 quarters of salt, 457 quarters of barley, 907 horse shoes, 7,900 nails for those shoes, and 80 *canenas* as well as large numbers of springalds, quarrels and caltrops. He distributed these victuals to various people, including Walter de Mauny, Bartholomew Burgherssh and the mariners who were stationed throughout the ports of Great Yarmouth, Sandwich and Orwell.¹⁸² Even before the fleet sailed for Flanders more victuals were still being added to the stores already collected and days before the armada sailed a further 72 quarters 5 bushels of beans and peas was collected for the king's army.¹⁸³ It was also the case that during Edward's stay on the continent through 1339, and on his return to the Low Countries in 1340, supplies were regularly collected for his men and shipped to the Low Countries. Table 2.9 shows the quantities of victuals collected and freighted to the continent for use by English armies in the period 1324 to 1346.

**Table 2.9 Quantities of Victuals Freighted to the Continent
by Campaign, 1324–1349**

Campaign	Wheat (qtr)	Oats (qtr)	Beans/Peas (qtr)	Malt (qtr)	Barley (qtr)	Flour (tuns)	Meat (carcasses)
St Sardos	2,560	237	889	—	—	479	—
Gascony (1337–49)	12,318	695	1,185	419	—	2,034	936
Low Countries	8,335	1,989	1,225	1,131	457	—	2,612
Brittany	5,336	1,000	1,125	1,000	1,500	—	1,416
Crécy	8,027	3,085	—	—	—	824	2,670

Note: It must be noted that in addition to the above supplies there were a further 26, 620 tuns of fish (20,000 of which was freighted in 1346), 3,172 tuns of wine and cider and 1,097 tuns of salt that were transported to various expeditions. For the sources, see E101/16/35; E101/16/36; E101/16/40; E101/17/4; E101/20/11; E101/20/30; E101/21/1; E101/21/3; E101/21/4; E101/21/5; E101/21/40; E101/23/11; E101/23/19; E101/23/20; E101/23/4; E101/24/6; E101/25/8; E101/25/11; E101/25/14; E101/25/16, nos. 1–8; E101/25/20, nos. 5–15; E101/568/9; C76/22, m. 1; CCR, 1343–46, p. 309;

¹⁸¹ E101/21/1.

¹⁸² E101/21/4.

¹⁸³ E101/21/5.

CPR, 1345–48, pp. 198, 204, 206, 215, 218–20. What are recorded in the table are only quarters there was also an enormous amounts of supplies collected in bushels and parts that have not been included. The victuals for Gascony were collected for only two expeditions: that of John Norwich in 1337 and Henry of Grosmont in 1345–49, although Grosmont was only there from 1345–47.

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Table 2.9 reveals that English armies campaigning on the continent brought enough supplies with them so that living off the land became a secondary consideration. Indeed, the overwhelming Exchequer evidence for this is corroborated by a newsletter sent from Edward's camp during the 1339 Low Countries expedition in which the English king states:

quel jour nous avoions noz allies devaunt nous, qe nous monstrerent qe iours vitailles estoient pres des penduz et qe le yver estoit durement aproschaunt, qils ne poient demurrer, einz y covendroit retrere sou le marche a retcurnes, quant lor vitailles estoient pres despenduz, quant ior vitailles fusrent despenduz. Verraiment ils feusrent le plus briefment vitallez par cause qils entenderont qe nostre dit cosin nous eust done hastive bataille.¹⁸⁴

In short Edward is suggesting in this letter that he had enough food to offer his allies substantial quantities as long as they stayed and participated in the operation. The English administration had taken the sometimes harsh lessons they had learnt in the Scottish campaigns of the 1320s and 1330s and applied these directly to their continental expeditions. In fact the English army at this stage, in terms of preparation and organisation, was streets ahead of its continental counterparts. This is not to say that all went well in these campaigns and some chronicles record Edward's frustration, particularly with the council in England, at their lacklustre performance in forwarding him supplies.¹⁸⁵ But this was probably more to do with the flow of money than the collection of foodstuffs, and although one chronicler notes that towards the end of the 1339 campaign Edward's forces became short of supplies, such a problem does not seem to have affected the following campaign of 1340.¹⁸⁶ In all, we may conclude that Edward's campaigns in the Low Countries, from 1338–40, were so well provisioned with foodstuffs that living off the land was relegated to a secondary role. What this evidence suggests is that Edward was not willing to take the risk of campaigning in France, with the aim of seeking a decisive battle, without sufficient supplies to keep his army in the field long enough to achieve his strategic aims.

¹⁸⁴ *Avesbury*, p. 305 but also, see *Knighton*, p. 19.

¹⁸⁵ *Murimuth*, p. 90.

¹⁸⁶ *Scalacronica*, p. 129; *French chronicle of London*, ed. G. J. Augier, Camden series 28 (1844), p. 79. The difficulties of a siege and the amount of material it took to successfully bring one to conclusion are discussed in detail by E. Amt, 'Besieging Bedford', pp. 105–19. It is important to remember that both 1339 and 1340 involved protracted sieges at Cambrai and Tournai, so the lack of victuals towards the end of 1339 does not reflect the fact that Edward had not prepared for sieges.

In the two previous sections of this chapter I have aimed to show that Edward II and Edward III's campaigns both in Scotland and France were well provided with foodstuffs from the outset. There were systems of supply already in place from the reign of Edward I, but under his son and grandson slight alterations were made to the administration of these systems, before Edward III increasingly began to place most of the Scottish supply system under private control from the late 1330s.¹⁸⁷ The gradual shift in the 1330s towards merchants handling the responsibility of supplying the King's forces in Scotland pre-empts the move by parliament in 1340 when the king, under pressure from the estates, enrolled a statute concerning the supply of the military which essentially laid down that from now 'military purveyance should henceforth be entrusted to merchants possessing no special commissions or warrants so that the people or any among them shall not be forced to sell anything against their desire or will'.¹⁸⁸ Of course, the king still used purveyance throughout the French wars but he now called the purveyors 'buyers'. The increasing tendency to allocate victual supply to merchants partly explains the lack of available evidence on purveyance during the campaigns conducted in 1350s. It is worthy of note that the expeditions from 1357 until 1371 were financed without parliamentary subsidies. As such the way supplies were purchased from 1357 to 1371 may create the impression that there was a lack of adequate planning, when it is more likely that the absence of source material owes more to the methods used rather than insufficient care in gathering supplies.

Having said this the quantities freighted during the Scottish wars were enormous, and although the armies of the period still suffered in certain campaigns this was a fault with the distribution of the supplies once stockpiled at Newcastle, Berwick or Skinburness, rather than a failure in their collection. Likewise, the continental campaigns of both Edward II and Edward III were sufficiently supplied with victuals from England. In all of the continental campaigns analysed in this book the quantities of provender transported over to the continent, with the army, were enough to sustain English forces in the field for an average of one to two months; a time span that most medieval expeditions were expected to be prosecuted over. The above findings should come as no surprise because these expeditions took several months to plan and cost enormous amounts of money. Indeed, for an army to be able to maintain itself in the field for one month usually took six months of preparation. It is doubtful that Edward would have

¹⁸⁷ See J. Sumption, *Divided houses*, pp. 62–63. It seems reasonable to assume, however, that throughout the 1350s, because of political considerations, the crown favoured privatised supply, which in turn gives the impression that far less effort was made by the king in securing supplies for his armies (we should also consider that Edward set some of the costs of the war in this period against the huge ransoms that were forthcoming from the battle of Poitiers). This method of supply had the advantage of reducing friction between the king and his subjects, while at the same time maintaining popular support for the war.

¹⁸⁸ W. R. Jones, 'Purveyance for war', p. 314.

thrown away all this meticulous planning and finance on the gamble that his forces could live off the land in enemy territory.¹⁸⁹ Moreover, the findings made here become more poignant when it is remembered that it is now accepted that Edward's ultimate aim was to force a hesitant Philip VI into battle, which could only be fulfilled if the English king could keep his army on enemy soil long enough for honour to dictate that the French must attack. This strategy in turn relies on how much provender the army freighted over with it. These foodstuffs were almost certainly taken with the forces on the large transport fleets and unloaded at the port of disembarkation. Indeed, the majority of the ships in these fleets were merchantmen and the crews of these vessels would have found this process routine. In fact it is likely that northern ships could unload of cargo at the quay side or beached on shore. In the latter case vessels would usually have lifting gear fixed to the mast and spars, or a second ship could be anchored alongside the beached craft, while other vessels were close by through means of a secure mooring post. Finally most northern ships had flat bottoms so they could be beached, unloaded and refloated at high tide.¹⁹⁰

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Foodstuffs were not the only requirement for armies and the fleets raised for transportation purposes during this period also freighted horses to the continent. Although this was perhaps the most complex component of logistical operations, unfortunately we know little about how it was achieved. We do know, for example, that ships were altered to make them suitable for horse transportation, but exactly what this entailed is difficult to suggest. Generally, however, it involved creating holes in the hulls of ships to which gangplanks would be placed from the quay, or the beach front, so that horses could be loaded into the waiting ships.¹⁹¹ But how the hurdles (clays or *claias* as they appear in the accounts) were employed in order to corral the horses while they were freighted on board the vessels remains conjectural.¹⁹² We can look at evidence from a later period in relation to how horses were freighted in the northern seas and draw out some possibilities. For example, in 1760 2,400 horses were transported to the conti-

¹⁸⁹ See, S. Herberstein, *Notes on Russia* (London, 1951), p. 99 for a detailed description of how troops serving in the early 1500s could survive on limited rations. It is surprising how little victuals soldiers could consume, when on active field campaigns, and still remain physically active. Such evidence suggest that although sedentary garrison troops may have consumed a large quantity of supplies such luxuries were not afforded to those serving on continental expeditions and the supplies collected by the English were indeed enough to sustain them for the majority of the campaign.

¹⁹⁰ See L. R. Martin, 'Horse and cargo handling on medieval Mediterranean ships', *The international journal of nautical archaeology* (2002), 31, no. 2, pp. 237–47.

¹⁹¹ See, for example, H. J. Hewitt, *The organisation of war*, pp. 85–87.

¹⁹² *Ibid.* See also, T. J. Runyan, 'Naval logistics', p. 90 and *idem*, 'The cog as a warship', *Cogs, caravels and galleons: the sailing ship 1000–1650*, ed. R. Gardiner and R. W. Unger (London, 1994), pp. 47–58, p. 56.

nent by building stalls and providing pails, pumps, grain measures, dung rakes, slings and shipping halters.¹⁹³ It is likely that similar arrangements were made in the medieval period. Indeed, in 1324 the horses that were transported to Gascony were equipped with 32 racks for their fodder and 7 tuns of water.¹⁹⁴ It is likely therefore that along with the horses other related necessities were also freighted.

Nevertheless, perhaps the best evidence we have that illuminates the techniques that were employed by mariners when it came to loading horses onto and off ships is provided by the many chronicle sources relating to the crusades and the iconographic evidence, particularly from the Mediterranean.¹⁹⁵ For example, as early as the eighth and ninth centuries Venetian and Byzantine documents record that doors inserted in the hull at water level permitted horses to be loaded and unloaded from ships.¹⁹⁶ Later chroniclers such as Villehardouin and Joinville also record instances of doors being inserted into the hulls of ships for this purpose.¹⁹⁷ It was still possible, however, to freight horses in oared craft and as with evidence recorded in the Bayeux Tapestry horses would be loaded by means of a ramp from the gunwales to the beach.¹⁹⁸

What we do know for certain from the available source material is that the procurement of hurdles and gangways was itself a large and complex logistical operation. These pieces of equipment were ordered in the thousands and transported to the port of embarkation, usually by the sheriffs of specified counties. One particular account compiled in 1359 by Roger de Louthe, sheriff of Essex, during the preparations for the Reims campaign, exemplifies the whole logistical operation of preparing ships for horse transportation.¹⁹⁹ In total he purchased 982 hurdles at 6s each from the hundreds of Dauseye, Thurstaple, Chelmsford and Tendring. Following this he transported the hurdles in carts to Maldon and Harwich. After the hurdles reached these two ports they were transferred from land to ten waiting ships (five at each port), before these vessels freighted the hurdles from Harwich and Maldon to the port of Sandwich. We are even told how many hurdles he shipped from each port. So, for example, the vessels at Harwich transported 500 while the ships at Maldon freighted 482. What Louthe's account also illuminates is just how substantial the hurdles may have been. For example, in one case it required sixteen carts, each pulled by four horses, in order to transport 100 hurdles to Maldon. Another example, relating to the Brittany expedition of 1342–43, also highlights the large numbers

¹⁹³ D. Syrett, *Shipping and military power*, pp. 19–20.

¹⁹⁴ E101/16/34; E101/16/35.

¹⁹⁵ L. R. Martin, 'Horse and cargo handling', pp. 237–47.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 240–41.

¹⁹⁷ Joinville and Villehardouin: *chronicles of the Crusades*, trans., M. R. B. Shaw (Penguin, 1963), p. 196. Joinville says the door was located on the port side of the ship.

¹⁹⁸ L. R. Martin, 'Horse and cargo handling', pp. 240–41. This practice was also well known to the Byzantines who often transported horses in galleys.

¹⁹⁹ E101/557/10, mm. 1–2.

of hurdles, gangplanks and bridges that were required to get the horses first aboard the ships and then to France. The sheriff of Essex and Hertfordshire was ordered to collect 1,000 hurdles, twenty-four bridges (*pontes*), 2,000 boards and 200 empty barrels for the shipment of horses to the duchy.²⁰⁰ While in 1356 the sheriff of Hampshire was told to make ready 1,000 hurdles and six bridges and the marshal of the household was told to ready 800 hurdles and three bridges for the transportation of horseflesh to Brittany.²⁰¹

In addition to how horses were actually shipped to the theatres of operations the question of how many horses were freighted in the transport fleets is also of paramount importance. Throughout this book the transportation of horseflesh will be mentioned and estimates will be put forward as to the number of horses that were freighted to the continent for use in campaigns. Some of these estimates may be viewed as generous so what now follows is a detailed discussion on the problems relating to the numbers of horses that required transportation. The first point to be noted is that by using the available Exchequer evidence we know that large numbers of horses could be transported by sea. Evidence from two Exchequer accounts highlights the possible carrying capabilities of ships of the period. One document concerns the transport of horses from Sandwich to Calais in 1356, while the other details the shipment of the earl of Cambridge's and the earl of March's horses to Brittany in 1375.²⁰² The first source lists twenty-three ships, which transported a total of 644 horses. The smallest number freighted by a single vessel was eighteen and the largest was forty. In the 1375 account eleven ships are recorded as transporting a total of 562 horses. The smallest number of horses that were transported in this flotilla by any one ship was thirty-two, while the largest number was seventy-two. Such evidence reinforces the idea that English ships were capable of carrying large numbers of men and horses to the continent. In fact sources relating to crusader armies from the previous century show that this was the case, and these forces regularly freighted horseflesh on vessels that were capable of holding between sixty and 100 horses each.²⁰³

Further evidence can be found in documents relating to the 1325 St Sardos expedition. These show that the ships that transported the earl of Surrey to Gascony seem to have been allocated two separate roles. One section of the fleet, some sixteen ships (10% of the flotilla), was specifically utilised for the shipment

²⁰⁰ E101/556/25, mm. 1–3.

²⁰¹ E101/561/18, mm. 1, 2.

²⁰² E101/695/20; E101/34/6.

²⁰³ J. H. Pryor, 'Transportation of horses by sea during the era of the crusades: eighth century to 1285, part 2: 1228–1285', *MM* 68 (1982), pp. 103–21, pp. 103–9. Even though Pryor's study concentrates on the shipping technology of the Italian city states, the Exchequer evidence from England undeniably shows that English vessels were capable of freighting similar numbers of horses.

of horseflesh.²⁰⁴ If we suggest, therefore, that this figure can be extrapolated to other transport fleets we can estimate how many vessels out of the armadas were used for the sole purpose of horse transportation. For example, out of the 747 ships that formed the Crécy fleet of 1346 some 100 vessels would have been utilised solely for the freighting of horseflesh. Indeed, owing to the fact that the 1346 army consisted of some, 2,500–3,000 men-at-arms and the same number of mounted archers, it is not unlikely that at least 200 of the vessels in this fleet were given over to the minimum number of 6,000 horses that would have required transportation.²⁰⁵ If we take the two examples from above and suggest that, on average, English ships could carry up to fifty horses each this would mean that the 200 vessels given over to horse transportation in 1346 would have been capable of freighting between 10,000 and 11,000 horses. Of course we do not know the size of the ships involved in the 1346 fleet but these numbers of horses do seem plausible. Indeed if we take the average of fifty horses per ship as reliable we could also suggest that the sixteen vessels in the 1325 fleet that were given over specifically for the transportation of horseflesh would have carried nearly 1,000 horses to Bordeaux.²⁰⁶

Even if we consider the above points it may still appear that the numbers of horses that required transportation in the period 1320–1360, as suggested in this book, could be an overestimation. But it is worth noting that the fleets of 1338, 1342, 1346 and 1359 all numbered over 400 ships and, with the exception of the 1346 army, the numbers of men that required transportation did not warrant armadas of this magnitude. The fact that transport fleets were so large suggests that it was the necessity of freighting large numbers of horses over with the forces that increased the numbers of vessels being employed. Consider, for example, the king's 1342 army that consisted of 3,800 men. This force was transported on 487 vessels, which equates to only eight men per ship. Without the need to freight a large number of horses the king could have transported an army of this size in fewer than 200 ships, saving valuable time and money. The fact that over twice this number of vessels was eventually employed probably reflects the (at least) 4,000 horses that were transported along with the army.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁴ E101/17/3.

²⁰⁵ Allowing for a minimum of one horse each the smallest number of horses that were transported in 1346 would have been some 5,000–6,000. The 8,000 foot soldiers that served would not require much room aboard ship. On the army numbers, see A. Ayton and P. Preston, *The battle of Crécy*, pp. 168, 171, 174, 181–89.

²⁰⁶ This is, perhaps, a low end estimate. It should be remembered that the 1324 army consisted of 679 mounted troops and for this force 706 horses were valued before the steward of the household (see below, pp. 150–51). If we consider that the 1325 army numbered 1,700 mounted soldiers we can see immediately that at least 1,000 horses must have been transported. As such the mean estimate of fifty horses per ship seems reliable.

²⁰⁷ This is why those fleets sailing to Gascony were smaller than the armadas that sailed to northern France. Horses could be purchased at leisure in Bordeaux and as such the Gascon

Indeed, if ten percent of this fleet was fitted out for horse transportation then some 50–60 ships would have been used for this purpose. At an average of fifty horses per ship these would have freighted some 2,500 to 3,000 horses.

One further point needs to be made. If we drastically reduce the number of horses that were transported we also have to reconsider the strategy that was adopted by English armies operating on the continent. If we were to say, for example, that each man-at-arms brought only one horse it is unlikely that he would remain a mounted soldier for the duration of the campaign. That his horse would be able to be kept in the field for over a month after a sea crossing, un-stabled and ridden everyday over sometimes rough terrain, including fording rivers, is doubtful.²⁰⁸ Such treatment would surely lead to a high attrition rate amongst the horses, and in order to counterbalance the potential losses a man-at-arms was likely to bring with him at least two, if not more, mounts. If we argue that large numbers of horses were not freighted in the transport fleets we must, therefore, view any English invading force as a developing organism with at least four stages of evolution throughout the course of a campaign. This last point can be illustrated by using a theoretical invading army consisting of 500 men-at-arms and 500 mounted archers with each man bringing one horse. The first stage of the force's evolution would be at the port of embarkation in England. Here it is a fully mounted army capable of rapid movement in the field. The second stage would occur at the point of disembarkation in France when perhaps a small percentage of the horses had become unfit for use because of the sea crossing. At this point the army is no longer fully mounted, and a small proportion of the force cannot, therefore, be deployed in a *chevauchée* action. The third stage would develop throughout the expedition when after two to three weeks in the field a quarter, if not more, of the horses would be suffering from life on campaign. As such an even larger section of the army ceases to be mounted. The final evolutionarily stage would be after the official hostilities had ceased and the force arrived at the port of embarkation ready to take ship back to England, with undoubtedly a large section of the army now on foot. The force that eventually arrived back in England would, therefore, bear little resemblance to the one that had originally

fleets generally carried fewer horses. Whereas in 1342 Edward had no choice but to freight all the horseflesh he needed with him to Brest. Comparing the 1355 transport fleet of the Black Prince with the 1342 transport armada of the king further reinforces this last point. The 1355 force probably numbered some 2,800 men that were freighted in 187 ships. Yet, the force of 1342 was 3,800 strong and was transported in 487 vessels. Immediately we can see that 300 extra ships were used in the king's Brittany expedition of 1342 to transport 1,000 more men. The extra ships were raised to freight the much larger numbers of horses that were undoubtedly shipped to Brest in 1342.

²⁰⁸ In 1908 the British Army Veterinary Department stated 'that while fit an animal can endure hardship and exertion without injury, once a troop horse is sick, injured or exhausted it is only an encumbrance to a fighting unit and has to be left behind, his place being filled by a fresh animal'. Furthermore, horses that were tired or winded could require up to five months before they were fully recovered, see D. L. Smith, 'Muscovite logistics', p. 45.

sailed. It is possible that troops used the horses of comrades who had fallen in battle but whose mounts survived. Although this certainly would have occurred the numbers of men dying, compared with the horse remaining alive, would be relatively few. In the battles conducted in this period English armies usually suffered only small numbers of casualties. At Crécy, for example, the English lost some 300 knights, suggesting that perhaps 600 horses were available to share out amongst the remaining army.²⁰⁹ Of course, relatives of these dead soldiers may still request that the crown paid them the *restauro equorum* that would be outstanding, creating some documentary complexities. Nevertheless, consideration of this point must be noted. This brings us to a stark assumption. If we were to say that, on the whole, most men-at-arms and mounted archers only brought one horse each on campaign we should perhaps alter our view of English field strategy and tactics. What we should be considering instead of a rapidly moving mounted army is a force that, over the course of an expedition, slowly develops into a large central core of foot soldiers (many of whom may have been mounted at the outset of the campaign) from which small divisions of mounted troops are sent to raid the surrounding area and cause panic in enemy territory, much like the sparks that fly from the main flame of a struck match.

Of course the English could replace their horses during the expedition but this prospect was entirely dependent on the theatre of operations. Those armies operating in the Low Countries and Gascony would have had this luxury, but those forces such as those of 1342 and 1346 would not. Neither would the prospect of replenishing horseflesh through raiding the enemies' territory have been attractive. Once a force had landed most 'moveable' goods would be placed in a safe location by the people of the surrounding countryside. It is also worth noting that the majority of the armies after 1340 that were of any size were transported to northern France with the aim of operating deep into enemy territory, where such on the march re-stocking would have been difficult. Furthermore, Calais is unlikely to have had bloodstocks that contained thousands of horses, owing to the logistics of feeding, coupled with the fact that, for the most part, the town was under siege from outlying French garrisons, making overland shipment of horses from the Low Countries difficult.

Considering these latter points it is surely the case that English armies operating in France consisted of large mounted forces capable of rapid field movements throughout the majority of the campaigns they launched. There are three major factors that point to such a conclusion. First, the pay for men-at-arms was conditional on them appearing at the muster with sufficient mounts. For example, in the 1338–39 expedition men-at-arms who appeared at the muster with fewer than three horses (*'quia qui non habuit nisi duos equos'*) were only given half pay.²¹⁰ Further in 1340 the crown was willing to allow a banneret to transport five

²⁰⁹ A. Ayton and P. Preston, *The battle of Crécy*, p. 151.

²¹⁰ See, A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, pp. 100–02 for a detailed analysis of the numbers of horses that each man was expected to bring to the muster. That men-at-arms brought two

horses, a knight four and esquires three to Flanders.²¹¹ This does not mean that all the horses brought by the men-at-arms were high quality warhorses and it is likely that only one mount out of the three would be categorised as such. Nevertheless, the evidence suggests that even when armies were campaigning in areas where they could purchase horses, such as the Low Countries, soldiers were still expected to bring at least three mounts with them.²¹² Second, as already noted, the actual size of the transport fleets that sailed from 1338 to 1359 point to large numbers of horses being freighted to campaigns in France. Third, the evidence from campaign newsletters shows that English armies, such as that of 1342, were capable of quick sorties directly into enemy territory, which argues for a large section of each army being mounted. Indeed it is this last point that the success of the early expeditions rested on.²¹³ Consequently one is drawn to the fact that, in the end, the intended destination of the expedition dictated how many horses, and therefore how many ships, the king required. The men-at-arms that served in the expeditions of 1338–40, 1342, 1346, 1355 and 1359 are likely to have brought at least three horses along with them.

It could be argued that the ships given over to horse transportation made more than one crossing during the process of disembarkation. The dates of service accorded to the vessels serving in the fleets during this period certainly support such an interpretation. This would not, however, reduce the numbers of horse brought on campaign because as we have seen a man-at-arms was required to bring a minimum number of horses in order to receive his pay. In addition, it is unlikely that an army disembarking in enemy territory would wish to wait on the beaches they had just landed on, as this was the time when an invading force was most vulnerable to attack. As such the horses transported with the armies of 1342 and 1346 were likely to have been brought along with the troops. It is possible that in the Low Countries expeditions and the campaign of 1359 horses were transported in several crossings, as the English had access to friendly ports in these expeditions. Nevertheless, as noted the size of the transport fleets

to three horses with them seems to have been standard practice in other parts of Europe, see D. L. Smith, 'Muscovite logistics', pp. 38–39.

²¹¹ See A. Ayton, *Knights warhorses*, p. 58. Another example is the 1370 campaign conducted by Robert Knolles. Knolles' force consisted of 2,000 men-at-arms and 2,000 mounted archers. However, this force freighted 8,464 horses over with it. Suggesting that each man-at-arms brought more than two horses. See, A. Ayton, 'Arms, armour and horses', *Medieval warfare*, ed. M. Keen (Oxford, 1999), pp. 186–208, pp. 197–98 draws attention to the Knolles example. That such numbers of horses were brought on campaign should not be doubted. In 1415 an earl was allowed to bring with him twenty-four horses on expeditions abroad. See J. Barker, *Agincourt*, p. 118.

²¹² In 1345, for example, James Audely's force was allowed to transport its horse to Bordeaux, see A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, p. 58.

²¹³ See, for example, *Avesbury*, pp. 340–44; *Knighton*, pp. 39–47; *Murimuth*, pp. 116–20. These accounts provide evidence of the rapid movements that English armies were capable of making.

argues against this interpretation. Indeed, the main advantage of using a ferry fleet system is that smaller flotillas can be raised, which in turn saves valuable time. That fleets of over 400 ships were raised in 1338, 1342 and 1346 suggests that all the horses were transported along with the soldiers. Only during the siege of Calais in 1347 and the Reims transport fleet of 1359 is it possible that horses were transported by the same ships in several crossings.²¹⁴

It is also important to bear in mind that horses were not just required for military actions but were also employed as beasts of burden. As such we must make allowance for the large numbers of horses that would have been required to haul the large baggage trains that accompanied English armies. During this period the principle seems to have been that one horse would be required to haul one quarter of grain.²¹⁵ If we remember that the amount of victuals transported over with the army in the Low Countries campaigns amounted to roughly 4,000 quarters of grain, including various quantities of meat, and we suggest that it would take four horses to pull one cart loaded with four quarters of wheat, then it would have required some 1,000 horses for the baggage train. In short the numbers of horses that were transported to France as suggested by this book should not be viewed as excessive.

²¹⁴ On the Reims campaign, see below pp. 143–46, 198–205.

²¹⁵ J. Masschaele, 'Transport costs', p. 269.

The Transportation of English Armies to France 1324–1360

Preparing the Fleet: A Timetable for Invasion

In Chapter 1 the discussion centred on the underlying bureaucratic procedures employed by the clerks, and the varying methods available to the kings of the period, when it came to raising a fleet. It was found that Edward II and Edward III had nine methods that they could exploit to raise a supply or transport armada. But the analysis did not investigate the time-scale involved in these operations. In short, how long did the government take to assemble a feet of ships from the issue of the first requisition order to the arrival of the last vessel at the port of embarkation?¹ This is, in fact, a complicated question to answer for two reasons. First, the size of the intended fleet had obvious implications for the length of time it would take to assemble it. Second, because the transport flotillas were raised in conjunction with the recruitment of the land-based forces, any delay in the latter would affect the former.

By examining four transport fleets between 1324 and 1359 it is possible to offer some broad conclusions on this question. The armadas in question are the St Sardos fleet, the 1338 Low Countries armada, the Crécy fleet and the Reims flotillas of 1359. These transport fleets provide a range of challenges to study. For example, the St Sardos campaign was the only significant expedition launched against France by Edward II, while the 1338 fleet was Edward III's first endeavour to the continent. The 1346 Crécy armada is important because of its size and the 1359 flotilla is the first visible royal transport fleet in the sources that can be assessed after the capture of Calais in 1347.

¹ Most ships began and completed their service within a week of each other. Although there are exceptions to this rule these are very much in the minority. It is difficult to know exactly when the ships would sail within the month or so that they were in service. Obviously, some vessels would arrive at the embarkation port earlier than others. However, if we take the middle part of the service as an indication of when most of the fleet was ready to sail this should provide a date with which to say the fleet-raising process had ceased. Of course the last ship to arrive would mark the point when the fleet was fully assembled.

The St Sardos campaign has a complicated chronology, but essentially it involved three separate expeditions. The first to sail in May 1324 was the earl of Kent's force; this was followed in September 1324 by a larger contingent, while the final fleet sailed from two ports in May and June of 1325 under the command of the earl of Surrey. The earliest orders for the requisitioning of ships were issued on 10 May 1324.² Although one of these orders stipulated that the arrested vessels were to be made ready within three days, and therefore could have transported the earl of Kent, that they could be requisitioned, manned, victualled and forwarded to the embarkation port in such a short space of time remains highly unlikely. This shows that on occasions the government had unrealistic expectations. They may have issued such an order however to induce a sense of urgency in the officials that were organising this fleet, or they may have simply been reacting to unfolding events in Gascony. Nevertheless, Kent's flotilla is not visible in the pay records and therefore it cannot be used in this analysis. The armada that set sail in September 1324, however, is fully recorded in the payrolls. As such the initial orders issued on 10 May were probably intended, in the main, for the fleet that was planned to sail in June.³ The first arrest orders were issued to eighty-eight ports.⁴ Over three days in May demands were issued for a specific number of ships from twenty-six of the eighty-eight ports already asked to contribute vessels to the fleet.⁵ In all, they were requested to provide sixty ships and send them to Plymouth.⁶ This gathering of ships was to coincide

² CCR, 1323–27, pp. 182–84; *Foedera*, II, i, p. 552.

³ The June fleet was delayed until September before finally setting out from Plymouth in that month. See R. A. Kaner, 'The management of the mobilisation of English armies', p. 83, who details the organisation of the fleets and the delays they suffered.

⁴ CCR, 1323–27, pp. 182–83, 187–88. There are five separate orders issued over the period of 10, 20, and 26 May. However, when the actual number of individual ports is untangled from these requests there are eighty-eight.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 187.

⁶ R. A. Kaner 'The management of the mobilisation of English armies', p. 86, slightly differs in his interpretation of these orders. He suggests that a total of thirty-four ships were to be sent to Plymouth. However, there were two sets of orders issued; one on 10 May the other on 20 May (CCR, 1323–27, pp. 182–83 records the first two orders that were issued on 10 May, while CCR, 1323–27, pp. 186–87 notes the third order issued on 26 May). The first orders contained two quite separate lists of ports and the numbers of vessels they were expected to supply should, therefore, be added together (when this is completed it can be seen that the demand was for sixty-eight ships). The confusion arises when on 26 May a third order was issued for a specified number of ships to be arrested from a list of ports. However, all the ports listed in this last order had actually been recorded in the previous two demands. Four of the ports have their expected shipping contributions increased from one ship to two, while Southampton and Weymouth have their shipping contributions decreased from a total of sixteen vessels to eight. Why this was so is difficult to answer. They could of course already have provided eight ships and were only required to find a further eight. Alternatively, it may be that the projected size of the army meant fewer ships were needed. When these three orders are untangled the actual number of ships that these twenty-six ports were to contribute to the fleet numbered sixty.

with the recruitment of the land-based forces that were to arrive at Plymouth on 8 July.⁷ On 16 July efforts were increased to place the gathering fleets under central control when John de Crombwell was appointed admiral.⁸ In addition, on 22 and 25 July three of the king's own ships were placed into active service and their masters were given the right to choose mariners.⁹ By 4 August a further five royal ships were added to this contingent.¹⁰ A total of sixty ships, therefore, had been requested, but given the fact that the crown issued orders to eighty-eight ports the evidence suggests that the king had greater ambitions than this.

The evidence shows that in 1324 the crown's original plan involved issuing the first arrest order in May. This, it was hoped, would give the clerks sufficient time to assemble a fleet by June. That the government would manage to gather an armada and organise a land army in the space of one month, however, has to be doubted. In fact the fleet did not sail until September 1324, though it is not certain whether this was due to the failure of the clerks in raising a sufficient flotilla or the commissions of array in assembling a land army. The evidence certainly suggests that it was not the fault of the former because Huggate's accounts clearly show that the majority of this fleet (66%) had been at the port of embarkation since the end of July.¹¹ That more mariners were admitted to the waiting ships throughout July, August and September does not detract from the fact that the fleet had been assembled. Thus, the clerks had taken roughly two months from the issue of the first order to requisition a fleet.

The discussion above has shown that in 1324 Edward II's officials were diligent in assembling a fleet in a short space of time. Were Edward III's officials as successful as Edward II's had been in 1324? Of course Edward III's first transport fleet to the continent in 1338 was much larger than the 1324 flotilla, so one would expect that it took longer to organise. In fact the 1338 armada had actually been planned for the previous year, and by 25 July 1337 a fleet of sixty-one ships had been assembled. On 17 August a further thirty-two vessels, from thirteen south-western, ports were added to the gathering fleet, and on 29 August fifty-seven recently requisitioned ships joined the armada, bringing its total size to 150 vessels.¹² This of course took place during the height of the trading season. However, the eventual break-up of this fleet in late 1337 owed more to Edward's diplomatic wrangling with the Low Countries princes, rather than with his own

⁷ R. A. Kaner, 'The management of the mobilisation of English armies', p. 88.

⁸ CPR, 1324–27, p. 3; *Foedera*, II, i, p. 562.

⁹ CPR, 1324–27, p. 7. These were Richard Fille, master of the *James*, manned by 80 mariners; John Dyve, master of the *Nicholas*; Andrew Rosekyn, master of the *Margrete*.

¹⁰ CPR, 1324–27, pp. 7, 14. These were the *Godyere*, commanded by Thomas Fauxet and operated by 40 mariners; the *Maudelyne*, commanded by Theobald de Barton with 40 mariners; the *Cog Seinte Piere*, commanded by William Ede and 30 mariners; the *Cog Notre Damme*, commanded by William Lucas; and the *Valence*, commanded by John Petit.

¹¹ BL, Add MS 7967, fols 94r–99v.

¹² E101/19/39.

administration or the procrastination of shipmasters. The result of the diplomatic problems meant that the requisitioning process was not restarted until February 1338, and recourse to Norwell's Wardrobe accounts shows that by the middle of July Edward's officers had raised a sufficient transport fleet.¹³ In short, Edward's administration had taken five months to assemble an armada. It is important to remember, however, that this fleet was over four times the size that of the 1324 flotilla.

How did Edward's government fare in 1346 when it raised the largest fleet of the fourteenth-century? The organisation for the 1346 fleet is complex. This was due in part because the orders, and efforts, to arrest ships seem to have been ongoing operation throughout the later part of 1345, when a transport flotilla had already been assembled and sailed to Flanders.¹⁴ After the murder of Jacques van Artevelde, Edward's ally in Flanders, the king returned to England and the 1345 campaign ended. But although this expedition had come to nought, the crown immediately set about raising a fleet of ships for another intended attack against France. Even though the orders seem rather late in the year for a second campaign to take place it does, nonetheless, seem that Edward did intend to sail back to either France or Flanders for a military venture. The first orders that were issued for the requisitioning of ships, after the collapse of the 1345 Flanders intervention, came on 28 August, when the earl of Arundel, Robert Ufford, Reginald Donnington and Phillip Whitton were told to arrest all ships of thirty tuns and over, from all the ports in England, and to make them ready at Portsmouth for a week after Michaelmas.¹⁵ Although to contemplate raising a sizeable fleet of ships in such a short space of time would seem ambitious, requisitioning officials were dispatched immediately to ports all over the kingdom. During September the arresting process was intensified and the mariners of five ships were already receiving advances on wages.¹⁶ That further vessels were raised, and their crews issued with advances on their wages is beyond doubt. Henry de Baa, William Redcliffe, John Montgomery and Griffin ap Cadwaldre were all paid expenses for arresting ships during the months of October and November 1345.¹⁷ Moreover, during the same period the earl of Arundel and Adam de Kilum expended a further £940 5s 8d on advances on mariners' wages.¹⁸ This is a significant sum and shows that by November 1345 a fleet of ships must have been arrested and made ready for service, but the onset of winter meant that the second planned

¹³ Norwell, pp. 363–86.

¹⁴ E101/390/12, fols 2r–3r. This records the payment of wages to mariners and arresting officials in addition to wages made over to the crews of the galleys of Bayonne amounting to £238 1s 6d dated 23 April to 18 July 1345. Therefore, the 1345 fleet had been raised and paid by July 1345.

¹⁵ Foedera, III, i, p. 57.

¹⁶ E101/390/12, fol. 3v.

¹⁷ Ibid., fols 3v and 4v.

¹⁸ Ibid.

campaign of 1345 would have to be postponed. Consequently, the gathered fleet was given permission to break up and return to their home ports.

It was at this moment, after the cancellation of 1345 ventures, that Edward and his council must have been discussing and formulating the plan for the Crécy expedition. It has been convincingly argued, in a recent book, that the Crécy exploit was planned from the outset of the campaign and did not occur as the result of a last minute change of plan because of the direction of the prevailing winds.¹⁹ The king must have had in mind something almost immediately because before the ships that were arrested in 1345 were allowed to return to their home ports the crown had secured an agreement from the shipmasters that they would return in the following year. Indeed, it was only two months later, in January 1346, when requisition officials were again searching England's ports for suitable ships.²⁰ It seems that Portsmouth was appointed to be the gathering point for all the vessels, and as such Gawain Corder was ordered to send the ships of Kent and Sussex to that port by 16 February.²¹ But during February problems began to surface in the arresting process and by the end of the month the ships of London had still not been sent to Portsmouth. Furthermore, a severe storm caused the waiting fleet to scatter, which led Edward once more to postpone his plans and to issue a new departure date for a fortnight after Easter.²² Yet again, however, an over-optimistic sailing date had been set by the crown for the embarkation of the army, and during April requisitioning officers were still visiting ports. For example, on 6 April Richard de Cotenhale and John Montgomery were searching the ports of the south and west coast for ships, and four days later, Walter Harewell was sent to the northern ports, while Robert de Barton was seconded to Montgomery as an extra member of the southwest team.²³ By this stage Edward and his advisors were getting desperate for sufficient ships, and orders were issued giving permission to the officials to arrest any vessel, even those as little as ten tuns burthen.²⁴ This order reveals the scale of Edward's up-and-coming campaign. In raising previous transport fleets that had usually involved the transportation of anything up to 5,000 men, Edward had not been required to arrest such small vessels; clearly this expedition was to be of a different magnitude.

By the end of April the requisitioning clerks had already managed to gather two large flotillas of ships at Portsmouth and Sandwich and the officials in charge of this operation, John de Baddeby, Thomas Clerc, Reginald Donnington,

¹⁹ A. Ayton and P. Preston, *The battle of Crécy*, especially Chapter 2 by Dr Ayton on the 'Crécy Campaign'. This follows on from the work of C. J. Rogers in *War cruel and sharp*, Chapter 10.

²⁰ E101/390/12, fol. 5r.

²¹ *Foedera*, III, i, p. 66.

²² *Foedera*, III, i, pp. 70, 71.

²³ E101/390/12, fol. 5v; E403/336, m. 41.

²⁴ C76/21, m. 5d.

John de Watenhul, John Hotton, Henry Raleshale, Griffin ap Cadwaldre and Robert de Holin, had issued advances on wages totalling £2,064 3s 9d for the mariners awaiting at the two ports.²⁵ During May the fleet was still increasing in size as John Hotton sent the mariners of London to the embarkation points and issued them with £94 4s 9d in wages. Moreover, Peter Reninard, a mariner of Bayonne, was provided with £34 2d for himself and seventy-eight mariners, while Robert Flambard continued the active requisitioning of more ships.²⁶ The evidence related above shows that by early to mid June 1346 Edward's officials had requisitioned and organised a large fleet of ships, at two ports, for the transportation of his army to Normandy. So far his clerks had issued a total of £2,192 8s 8d in advance wages to mariners.

To conclude, the evidence relating to the preparations for the 1346 campaign shows that the fleet was raised in two stages. The first of these occurred in late 1345. However, the ships that had been collected by December of that year were eventually given permission to return to their home ports, though this was conditional on their returning to the king's service in 1346. The second part of the operation took place in 1346 between the months of January and July. So, although it looks like the crown had raised the largest fleet of ships ever assembled in the fourteenth century in six to seven months the vessels that were requisitioned in 1345, which must have returned to service in 1346, surely saved the crown some two months of extra preparation. Given this fact it is not going too far to suggest that the Crécy transport armada really took over nine months to prepare.

*

The three fleets detailed above were organised and raised in a period before the English government had control of a safe port on French soil. This changed in 1347 when Edward III captured the strategically important town of Calais. How, if at all, did the capture of Calais affect the fleet-raising procedure? The transportation of the 1359 force that consisted of the best-equipped army ever assembled by Edward III is the ideal place to evaluate this question. In 1359 some 10,000 mounted men required transportation to Calais, which meant that the demands on the merchant fleet were significant. The first orders for the arrest of ships were issued to Guy Brian, admiral of the west, on 16 December 1358. This writ requested that all available ships of 76 tuns and below should be requisitioned for service.²⁷ Two days later a similar request was sent to Robert Morley, admiral of the north.²⁸ In addition to these orders the admirals were sent a list of towns and ports that had been required to build barges for the crossing, and

²⁵ E101/390/12, fols 6v, 7r; E403/336, mm. 42, 43, 44.

²⁶ E403/336, mm. 42–44; E101/390/12, fol. 8r.

²⁷ *Foedera*, III, i, p. 412. This order in itself is interesting because it looks as though the crown did not intend to arrest large vessels for this transport fleet. This is certainly borne out by the evidence on the Exchequer accounts, which lists the tonnages of the arrested ships.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

they were to report back by the end of January 1359 and to provide the crown with a list of the arrested ships, with their masters, their home ports and the names of the men who had provided security for the appearance of these vessels at the embarkation port.²⁹ On 5 June these orders were repeated and the ships were to be ready at Sandwich by 8 July.³⁰ By this stage eleven ships, from ports situated on the east coast, had been allocated to the Black Prince's officers for the supply needs of the assembled forces at Sandwich.³¹ On 7 June the king ordered the arrest of mariners to serve on seventeen ships, which were also to be ready for early July.³² The crown also secured the services of eight further ships from Gravelines, Sluys and Dunkirk, which were procured throughout August.³³

It is clear, therefore, that the English government was attempting to raise a large transport fleet, which was to be ready at Sandwich by early July. As such the first requisition orders had been issued in December 1358. Thus the timetable involved for raising this armada was similar to that of the 1346 expedition. Yet the 1359 campaign is complicated by the changes implemented by the crown after 1342.³⁴ This meant that a section of the land-based force organised its own transportation. As such the payrolls only cover five of the six fleets that sailed. These show that the first contingents of the army sailed in August 1359. The first to take passage was several contingents of the royal household followed by a smaller force that sailed aboard twenty-one vessels. After this small flotilla the duke of Lancaster embarked in September and he was followed in October by the earl of March, before the king finally took ship a week or so after March.³⁵ Therefore, in order to raise a sufficient fleet for the 1359 expedition the crown's officials had taken some eight months.

The discussion above has shown that the length of time required to raise a fleet was conditioned by the size of the land-based army that needed transportation. That the flotilla in 1324 only took some two months was because the army for that campaign was relatively small and mainly consisted of foot soldiers, whereas the fleets of 1338, 1346 and 1359 had to freight armies ranging from 3,000 to 15,000, mainly mounted men. The evidence suggests that any armada

²⁹ R. A. Kaner, 'The management of the mobilisation of English armies', pp. 170–71.

³⁰ *Foedera*, III, i, pp. 427–28.

³¹ R. A. Kaner, 'The management of the mobilisation of English armies', p. 174. In addition nine ships were employed by the seneschal of Gascony for his transport needs. These came from Dartmouth (5), Fowey (2) and Plymouth (2). These were crewed by 241 mariners and carried forty men-at-arms and forty archers, see E101/27/19.

³² *Foedera*, III, i, p. 428. These vessels and their masters did serve in the expedition. See *ibid.*, and E101/27/31; E101/27/36; E101/27/37

³³ *Foedera*, III, i, p. 444.

³⁴ On 1342, see above pp. 43–46 and below pp. 158–65.

³⁵ Fifteen members of the royal household began receiving pay in August 1359. Sir William Grandson was the first to begin receiving pay on 3 August 1359, although he was not a member the household. The first of the household to be paid wages was Simon Bisset on 16 August 1359, see E101/393/11, fols 81r, 82v, 83v, 84r, 85, 85v.

that was over 400 vessels would take the government at least five months to assemble. Thus, from 1338 onwards to raise a fleet of transport ships would take the administration anywhere between five to nine months. The following section will analyse the size and composition of royal transport fleets between 1324 and 1359 in order to see more clearly the demands that were placed on the English merchant fleet. It is important to stress that although the following analysis appears to provide accurate calculations of the size of the fleets in operation, because of the nature of the sources these should be taken as impressions or estimations as to the magnitude of the armadas in question for three reasons. First, every fleet that sailed in this period contained many ships that, for a variety of reasons, served for no pay and are thus 'invisible' in the payrolls. Second, the clerks who compiled the accounts could, and did, adopt ingenious procedures that were designed to simplify those records, but which make the accuracy of such documents questionable.³⁶ Third, there are expeditions, such as those of 1340 and 1346, in which the surviving source material is fragmentary. Consequently, it is only possible to provide approximations as to the possible size of the fleets. Nevertheless, the impressions that such an analysis creates are extremely valuable in highlighting the involvement of the English merchant fleet in the wars conducted during this period.

Two Transport Fleets of Edward II's Reign, 1324–1325

The outbreak of the war of St Sardos in 1324 came at an unfortunate time for Edward II. Two years earlier he had crushed the rebellion of the earl of Lancaster but since that time his rule in England had rested on a foundation of fear rather than deference. The architects of this policy were Edward's closest advisors, the two Despensers and Walter Stapeldon.³⁷ The problem posed by St Sardos was how to allow Edward personally to campaign in France while his advisors remained in England? If they stayed behind their political opponents were sure to make an attempt on their lives, but if they went France they also expected to face the full wrath of the French king who had a particular dislike of

³⁶ On problems relating to the sources and the ingenious accounting procedures sometimes adopted by the clerks, see A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, Chapter 5; A. Ayton and P. Preston, *The battle of Crécy*, p. 177; D. Grummitt, *The Calais garrison: war and military service in England, 1436–1558* (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 44–49.

³⁷ There are several studies that provide a detailed account of Edward's reign, how the Despensers influenced him and the effect the War of St Sardos had on the political framework. The best are: T. F. Tout, *The place of the reign of Edward II in English history* (Manchester, 1914): Chapter 4 and 6 deal with the Despensers and the problems of Gascony; N. Fryde, *The tyranny and fall of Edward II, 1321–1326*; M. Vale, *The Angevin legacy*, pp. 227–44; M. Buck, *Politics, finance and the church in the reign of Edward II: Walter Stapeldon treasurer of England* (Cambridge, 1983) Chapters 7, 9 and 10; R. M. Haines, *King Edward II: Edward of Caernarfon, his life, his reign, and its aftermath, 1284–1330* (London, 2003).

them because of their treatment of his sister, Edward's wife. Thus a compromise was reached. Edward would send his half brother, the earl of Kent, and while he campaigned in Gascony, Edward would direct the campaign from afar. Bearing in mind Edward's disastrous war leadership, at first sight, this method of directing the conflict seems to have offered some advantages. Unfortunately, the earl of Kent was no more a general than his half-brother.

The chronology of the campaign has been outlined above and it essentially involved three separate expeditions.³⁸ Two of these sailed in 1324 while the third sailed in 1325, under the command of the earl of Surrey. The aim of this discussion is to analyse these fleets in order to understand their size, structure, and how many men and horses they were required to transport. There are problems in attempting this, however, and the major stumbling block to a detailed analysis concerns the payroll evidence relating to the transport fleet of the earl of Kent. As Kent set sail in May 1324 any Exchequer account relating to his flotilla would be dated to the seventeenth year of Edward II's reign. Yet no such payroll exists. We must conclude, therefore, that the transport fleet consisted of ships serving for no pay or that the payroll for this expedition has since been lost. Nevertheless, Kent's force was rather small, consisting of only a few hundred men and the transport needs for such a force would probably not have exceeded twenty ships.

Fortunately, the armada that set sail in September 1324 is fully recorded in the payrolls. Over three days in May demands were issued for a specific number of ships from twenty-six of the eighty-eight ports already asked to contribute vessels to the fleet. In all, they were requested to provide sixty ships and send them to Plymouth. The gathering of these vessels was to coincide with the recruitment of the expeditionary forces. Therefore, a total of sixty ships had been requested. But can we arrive at a more accurate estimate of the final numbers of ships that eventually appeared at Plymouth to transport the army?

There are several extant Exchequer accounts relating to the wages of mariners who served in the St Sardos expedition; however, the majority of these payrolls cover the fleets that transported the earl of Surrey in 1325. The set of accounts drawn up by Nicholas Huggate reveal the transport fleet that freighted the September 1324 army.³⁹ In all Huggate paid wages to 81 ships' crews, which were contributed by forty-one ports. In addition a further 25 ships freighted supplies along with the army.⁴⁰ These eighty-one ships served from May to November, but with staggered start dates suggesting that the transportation of troops was achieved using several small fleets. The numbers of mariners who manned these ships was 1,182, including masters and constables (this rises to 1,372 if we include

³⁸ See pp. 00–00 above.

³⁹ BL, Add MS 7967, fols 94r–99v.

⁴⁰ These vessels were supplied by twenty-two ports, of which sixteen (72.7%) were located in the south and west and five (22.7%) north of the Thames, while a Spanish port contributed one ship, the *Seintemary*, commanded by Fernando de Fain. The largest single supplier of ships was Dartmouth, which provided seven vessels (15.9%) manned by 190 mariners (15.9%).

the mariners aboard the eight king's ships). This suggests that the majority of the ships were ready and waiting for the retinues whose recruitment had begun in June. In addition to the eighty-one ships paid by Huggate, a further three ships from London also joined the fleet, as did two extra vessels contributed by the port of Blackeneye, which were provided at that port's own cost.⁴¹ Finally, seven ships of the king further bolstered the armada.⁴² This brought the overall size of the September transport fleet to ninety-three individual ships.

One important question that remains to be considered is what was the size of the land-based army these vessels had to transport, and how many horses would these troops have brought with them? The St Sardos *vadia guerre* is a difficult source, with many of the recorded retinues being small in size, while large numbers of foot soldiers served throughout the whole campaign.⁴³ Nevertheless, by utilising these pay accounts, it is possible to suggest that eight bannerets, eighty-six knights, 369 esquires and 216 men-at-arms sailed on the September fleet. Accompanying these mounted troops were 1,700-foot soldiers. This would have meant that, on average, each ship would have had to carry twenty-five individuals. Of course, this was not how the fleet was arranged, because some ships were specifically equipped to freight the army's horses.⁴⁴ But this average of men per ship seems reasonable for the vessels of the period. The mounted contingents are likely to have brought with them roughly 1,500 horses. We know that 706 of these were valued before the steward of the household prior to the campaign but only the most expensive horses brought would be valued in such a way.⁴⁵ Taking as our guide this estimate of 1,500 horses, each ship would have to carry on average sixteen horses. This is indeed entirely plausible. For example, we can calculate the tunnage of forty-eight out of the ninety-three ships that transported the English contingents to Bordeaux in 1324. The total tunnage of these forty-eight vessels was 5,960 tuns, giving an average of 124 tuns per ship. If we were to assume that for every two-tuns of ship one horse would be transported it is not inconceivable that up to 1,000 horses could have been transported to Bordeaux in 1324.⁴⁶

In conclusion, it seems that the fleet that set sail from Plymouth between May and September 1324 numbered ninety-three ships.⁴⁷ The fact that the initial

⁴¹ CCR, 1323–27, pp. 214, 225.

⁴² CPR, 1324–27, pp. 7, 14.

⁴³ BL, Add MS 7967, fols 30r–53r; the foot soldiers are recorded on fols 75r–93v.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, fols 8r, 8v.

⁴⁵ E101/16/9, mm. 1, 2, 1d, 2d; E101/16/38, mm. 1, 1d, 2; E101/17/2, mm. 1, 1d, 2, 3, 3d, 4. i.e., one per man-at-arms providing that they were valued at 100s or more.

⁴⁶ BL, Add MS 7967, fols 94r–98r.

⁴⁷ The majority of the ships came from ports south and west of the Thames, which contributed fifty vessels (53%) and 1,239 mariners (59%), this includes the 190 mariners noted as serving on the king's ships.

orders specifically requested the ports to contribute sixty ships, and that a total of ninety-three eventually appeared (albeit seven of them being the king's) shows that the raising of a fleet could be a precise operation. It will be remembered at this point that in Chapter 1 it was noted that before the requisition process was initiated crown officials would visit local port communities and meet with port men and shipowners in order to discover how many vessels that port or community could provide. What the discussion on the St Sardos fleet-raising procedure shows is that these consultations provided the crown with accurate data that was used to prepare the arrest orders.

The Earl of Surrey's Transport Fleet, 1325

John de Warenne, earl of Surrey, was dispatched to Gascony on 22 May 1325.⁴⁸ Yet his departure followed months of delays. The original plan for his deployment had been 17 March, and commissions had been working toward this goal since the previous October. In the end, the transport ships sailed in two separate fleets from Portsmouth and Harwich.⁴⁹ The flotilla that freighted the earl of Surrey's forces was the largest of the three armadas to depart for Bordeaux between May 1324 and June 1325. The payrolls relating to the maritime service for this particular fleet are spread throughout four separate manuscripts.⁵⁰ Of these, only two contain the records for the ships involved in the actual transportation of Surrey's troops and horses, as the other accounts relate to a fleet of supply ships bound for Gascony later in the year.⁵¹

These individual sources reveal the structure and size of each of the flotillas that operated during the 1325 phase of the war. The most informative payroll for the earl of Surrey's ships is the account of Walter de Otterhampton.⁵² He records the wages paid to eighty-four individual ships contributed by 26 ports.⁵³ The numbers of masters, constables and mariners who served on this fleet was 2,148.⁵⁴ The majority of these ships, sixty-one (72%), began their paid service

⁴⁸ This is when the ship that transported him, the *Cog de Touz Seintz*, commanded by Roger atte Hurne of Southampton, began its paid service. See BL, Add MS 7967, fol. 98r.

⁴⁹ C61/36, m. 21; R. A. Kaner, 'The management of the mobilisation of English armies', p. 97.

⁵⁰ E101/16/35; E101/16/40; E101/17/3; BL, Add MS 7967, fols 98r–99v.

⁵¹ E101/17/3; BL, Add MS 7967. These list the transport ships.

⁵² E101/17/3, mm. 1b, 2, 6b, 7, 9.

⁵³ Of these ports twenty-three (88.4%) are located in the south and west while three (11.5%) are situated north of the Thames on the east coast. Those ports in the south and west supplied eighty-eight vessels (97%), while the ports on the east coast contributed two (3%).

⁵⁴ 1,843 (96.5%) of these men operated ships from the south and western ports, and sixty-four mariners (3.5%) manned the east coast vessels. The largest supplier of ships was the port of Teignmouth, which provided nine vessels (11.2%) operated by 154 mariners (8.4%). But the port that supplied the greatest number of seamen was Dartmouth, which contributed eight ships manned by 218 mariners (11.8%). This number includes the seventy-five mariners that

in March and served through until May, while twenty-three (27%) served from April to May. The cost of these eighty ships to the crown was £1,213 14s 6d, while an added expense of £38 2s 3d was paid to the sheriff of Southampton for fitting out sixteen ships for '*equus ad arma*'.

The accounts of Nicholas de Huggate for this campaign also contain relevant entries on ships that served in the Warenne transport fleet. Six vessels are recorded in Huggate's accounts with dates of service that accord with the second flotilla that set sail from Harwich. This conclusion is drawn by noting that six ships started their service in May and completed it by June.⁵⁵ This second transport flotilla, relating to the earl of Surrey's army was therefore not as large as the initial armada, which had set sail in May.⁵⁶

In addition to these payrolls relating to the transport fleets of 1325 there are also related accounts that show seventy-three ships accompanied the earl carrying supplies.⁵⁷ One of these is an account compiled by John Sturmy. This lists the names of fifty-four ships from twenty-five ports. Unfortunately, the document does not record the crew sizes of these ships; but it is interesting in the sense that it is linked to two further Exchequer accounts.⁵⁸ In the early months of 1325 Richard de la Pole entered into several indentures with local sheriffs and castle custodians in order to raise provisions and arms for Warenne's forces. One of these indentures was sealed between de la Pole and Henry de Fauconberge, sheriff of Nottingham. Fauconberge agreed to supply springalds and quarrels for the campaign.⁵⁹ This he must have achieved for in the Sturmy account he is recorded as freighting the *Margrete* of Ravenser, commanded by John Hardroneray, from the port of Hull. In all de la Pole and his suppliers sent thirteen ships to Gascony, and of these, three appear in the expenses of John Sturmy. Furthermore, ten ships from Sturmy's account are also enrolled in Huggate's records.⁶⁰ These are provided with dates of service, and apart from one vessel, all of these ten ships began their service in June, placing them in the second of the Warenne transport fleets. Finally, any discussion of maritime activity during the war of St

served on board three ships recorded in Huggate's accounts, which should be included in this fleet.

⁵⁵ BL, Add MS 7967, fol. 98r.

⁵⁶ The twenty-nine ships that formed this second fleet were supplied by eighteen ports. Only four (22.2%) of these vessels were from ports situated south and west of the Thames while the rest were located on the east coast. 731 masters, constables and mariners operated this flotilla. The largest suppliers of ships were the ports of Brightlingsea and Ipswich, which both contributed five vessels each and 220 seamen. But the five ships from Ipswich provided 160 of these men, suggesting that that their vessels were somewhat larger than those of Brightlingsea.

⁵⁷ E101/16/40, rolls 1–4. This source records the expenses of John Sturmy, admiral of the northern fleet.

⁵⁸ E101/16/34; BL, Add MS 7967.

⁵⁹ E101/16/34, no. 7.

⁶⁰ E101/16/40; BL, Add MS 7967, fols 98r–98v.

Sardos must take into account the service of the Cinque Ports. In mid-July 1325 they sent a fleet of twenty-one ships out to sea for 28 days. This fleet was not involved in transportation duties and its purpose was to protect the southern coastline from predatory French ships.⁶¹

The discussion above reveals, therefore, that in the spring and summer of 1325 there were 163 ships involved in the transportation of troops to Gascony. But how many men and horses were transported in Warenne's army and was this number of ships sufficient for the task? It has been calculated that the whole force of 1325 would have been 5,357 strong. Of these, 4,750 were foot soldiers and 607 were knights, esquires and men-at-arms.⁶² It is likely that these soldiers brought with them roughly 1,500 horses including baggage and pack animals. This would result in each ship in the fleet having to freight, on average, thirty-three men and thirteen horses.

In conclusion, this section has shown that 163 ships were involved in the transportation of soldiers to Gascony. If we include the supply ships and the twenty-one vessels provided by the Cinque Ports, then from May 1324 to August 1325 some 301 ships operated throughout the whole campaign. On board these vessels there were probably 6,000 mariners.⁶³ The 183 ships specifically involved in troop transportation had to freight 1,300 mounted men and 6,400 foot soldiers and possibly as many as 3,000 horses, including baggage and pack animals. On average this would mean that each vessel would have had to carry forty-five men and eighteen horses in addition to supplies of food and arms. Again, based on the Exchequer evidence of the capacity for ships from this period, this is entirely plausible. The cost of the maritime arm of the campaign to Edward's treasury was £2,969 4s 4d. In all, the organisation of the campaign appears to have performed reasonably well. Of course there were delays, but this dogged almost every campaign of the period, and the majority of the ships were requisitioned in time and in sufficient numbers for the troops to be able to board once they had been mustered. In addition, a fleet of ships was also raised to perform a coastal protection service during a delicate time in the negotiation of the peace treaty at the end of the campaign. In essence, the organisational capabilities of the English government in requisitioning transport fleets allowed Edward II to attempt an offensive campaign in continental Europe to safeguard his possessions. This experience, of raising a large transportation and supply fleet, would be utilised and developed further by Edward III, whose continental ambitions

⁶¹ E101/17/10, mm. 1–3. On board these vessels were 1,006 masters, constables and mariners. Only three of the Cinque Ports supplied vessels for this fleet: Winchelsea, Sandwich and Rye. Winchelsea contributed the largest number of ships (fourteen vessels manned by 672 seamen).

⁶² The troop numbers are discussed in detail by R. A. Kaner, 'The management of the mobilisation of English armies', pp. 98–99.

⁶³ This is an estimate because forty-four ships are provided with no exact crew numbers.

required armadas that could transport tens of thousands of men and animals, and giving the king unprecedented access to the continent. It is to these armadas that this study now turns.

Five Transport Fleets for Edward III's Armies, 1338–1359

The previous section examined the only army transport fleets that sailed to France during the reign of Edward II. Although when compared to his son's continental armadas this number of transport fleets seems paltry it should be kept in mind that Edward II had raised flotillas of considerable size throughout his Scottish expeditions. Indeed, as we have already seen, it is unlikely that Edward III ever matched the 1322 fleet his father sent to Scotland. This being said, the experience gained by the administrative staff through a sustained fleet-raising programme between 1322 and 1337 provided a useful foundation for Edward III's officials thereafter. Through a detailed investigation of each of the five transport fleets raised between 1338 and 1359, it will be shown just how large were the maritime dimensions of Edward III's continental expeditions.

In 1337 Edward III officially declared war against Philip of Valois, and although he raised a fleet of some 150 ships during the summer of that year the English king was unable to launch his expedition.⁶⁴ The reason for this delay lay more with Edward's complicated diplomatic talks with the Low Countries princes, rather than a failure in English logistical organisation. That the embassies were delayed during 1337 was no surprise because much rested on Edward III's first continental ventures between 1338 and 1340. He had painstakingly built a large coalition of allies at the enormous cost of £382,000.⁶⁵ Although Edward ultimately failed during these years to realise his goal of bringing the French king to battle, the experience gained by Edward's administration, in mobilising and organising two transport fleets, placed his bureaucratic staff in the ideal position to raise even larger armadas during the 1340s and 1350s. Nevertheless, as the foregoing discussion on the logistics of the war of St Sardos has shown, Edward had the framework of a system in place with which to construct a transport fleet that could be further developed to achieve better results. Considering this latter point, the question is just how successful was Edward III in 1338 in raising a transport fleet?

There are several payrolls that are of relevance to the 1338 armada, which provide us with the evidence to quantify the maritime contribution to that campaign.⁶⁶ These individual accounts are of great value because close inspection

⁶⁴ E101/19/39.

⁶⁵ B. Lyon, 'Infrastructure and purpose', p. 66.

⁶⁶ E101//20/27; E101/20/39; E101/21/7; E101/21/8; E101/21/9; E101/21/10; E101/21/12; E101/22/38; Norwell.

of these particulars, and their comparison with the *vadia nautarum* section in the Wardrobe book of William Norwell, shows that, in some cases, many vessels were recorded in the particulars that never made it into Norwell's final accounts. For example, in 1338 John de Watenhul compiled a document for the admiral of the southern fleet that records the details of 130 ships.⁶⁷ Yet when this payroll is compared with the *vadia nautarum* we find that thirty-two ships listed on the Watenhul document are not recorded in *Norwell*. On the other hand, 165 vessels in the Wardrobe book are not provided with exact dates of service, but their start and completion dates can be discovered by using the Exchequer accounts, which do provide exact dates for the majority of the 165 ships. A similar payroll was also compiled by the admiral of the northern fleet for the vessels requisitioned under his orders.⁶⁸ 124 individual ships arrested from nineteen ports and manned by 4,290 masters, constables and mariners are recorded on this account. Yet comparison with the Wardrobe book shows that one vessel that was recorded on this latter document is absent from Norwell's final accounts. A second payroll, which notes the wages paid to 122 ships' crews, also has two vessels that are absent from the Wardrobe book.⁶⁹ Finally, a further ship that participated in the transport fleet of July 1338 can be found by examining a set of 165 indentures agreed between Nicholas Pyk and various shipmasters. This ship, called the *Cog Touz Seintz*, is absent from the Wardrobe book, the reason for this probably being that this ship's crew had their wages paid in the form of victuals and not money.⁷⁰

In addition to the vessels mentioned above that are not included in the *vadia nautarum*, we need to take account of those crews who forfeited their wages because of a series of piratical attacks that took place between August 1338 and early 1339.⁷¹ Problematically of the three sources that provide evidence for these attacks only the order demanding an investigation into the involvement of East Anglian ships (dated to March 1340) provides a definitive list of the vessels involved.⁷² As no English fleet was at sea between April 1339 and June 1340 it is clear that the order dated to March 1340 records an incident of piracy that occurred earlier than April 1339. Complications arise in determining which fleet these vessels sailed in because between July 1338 and March 1340 four English

⁶⁷ E101/21/7.

⁶⁸ E101/21/12.

⁶⁹ E101/21/10.

⁷⁰ E101/20/39, no. 30.

⁷¹ CPR, 1338–40, pp. 491–92 lists sixty-four east Anglian vessels involved in one act. CPR, 1338–40, p. 143 records an incident that occurred in August 1338. E101/21/11 seems to cover an incident of piracy committed by members of the Cinque Ports. I am grateful to Mr Stephen Pegg for highlighting the third of these. The record of the August incident does not include the names of the ships involved.

⁷² E101/21/11 does list the ships involved but the document is difficult to read with any accuracy.

flotillas operated in the Channel. The first fleet to sail was the transport armada in July 1338. This was followed in December 1338 by a second flotilla of twenty-six ships freighting wool to Flanders.⁷³ In the winter of 1338–39 a small fleet from the Cinque Ports sailed to and burnt Boulogne, while in the months of March and April 1339 Robert Morley was at sea with a fleet of warships.⁷⁴ Unfortunately, only two payrolls survive and they record the ships that were involved in the 1338 transport fleet and the wool flotilla. By examining both the names of the ships and the masters recorded in the order dated to 1340 and comparing these with the two surviving payrolls it appears that some of the shipmasters involved in piracy sailed in both the transport fleet and the wool flotilla, while other shipmasters cannot be placed in either the 1338 transport fleet or wool flotilla.

This suggests that there were at least two incidents of piracy committed between August 1338 and January 1339.⁷⁵ We know that one of these occurred in August 1338.⁷⁶ Further, the inclusion in the 1340 order of ships and masters that only sailed in the wool flotilla argues that some vessels from this fleet committed a second act of piracy in the winter of 1338–39. A possible third incident involving Cinque Port ships seems to have been committed by the fleet that burnt Boulogne in the winter of 1338–39.⁷⁷ That the fleet under Morley's command committed any attacks against allied shipping can be discounted, as the only recorded action that involved this fleet concerns an attack on a flotilla of Genoese vessels.

This leaves us with the suggestion that the sixty-four ships listed in the 1340 order were involved in one of the two attacks that occurred between August and December 1338. It is also worthy of note that thirteen ships listed in the 1340 source are only recorded with the names of their owners. This means that these vessels cannot be compared with the two surviving payrolls. When the fifty-one ships in the 1340 order that are recorded with their masters are compared to the payrolls it can be seen that twelve masters who served in the July 1338 transport armada did take part in one of the attacks, but they did so commanding different ships to the ones they manned in the transport fleet. For them to be part of August 1338 attack they would have had to change ships in Flanders, after they had disembarked the army. This seems unlikely and we can therefore be

⁷³ E101/21/13, m. 3, records the wool fleet and was composed entirely of East Anglian vessels.

⁷⁴ For the Cinque Port fleet, see *Murimuth*, p. 103 and for the Morley flotilla, see N. A. M. Rodger, *Safeguard of the Sea*, p. 97. It is likely that the £452 20d spent by John Crabbe and Thomas Drayton on mariners wages included payments that were issued to the mariners serving in Morley's fleet. The payments were issued in April and June 1339, see E101/21/31; E101/22/8.

⁷⁵ There is confusion in the *Patent Roll* order itself. For example, the master William Rodyng is repeated twice as commander of two different ships. This provides evidence that he must have taken part in two acts of piracy as commander of two different vessels. He is recorded as master of the Cog *John* and the *Evangelist*.

⁷⁶ CPR, 1338–40, p. 143.

⁷⁷ E101/21/11.

certain that these twelve ships were not part of the transport fleet. Five vessels named in the 1340 order sailed in just the wool fleet, while thirteen ships and shipmasters that sailed in the 1338 transport fleet were involved in one of the two piracy incidents between August 1338 and the winter of 1338/39, but were still recorded in the Wardrobe book. The leaves us with twenty-one ships and masters that participated in one of the acts of piracy, but which are 'missing' from the two surviving payrolls. It is suggested here that these twenty-one ships were part of the 1338 transport fleet but were struck off the final payrolls as punishment for this act. This is argued because it is unlikely that flotilla freighting the wool would have been any larger than the twenty-six visible ships recorded in the payroll. Moreover, subtracting, or taking away, pay from ships' crews that were involved in misdemeanours was a punishment that was enacted in 1342 and on this occasion such measures were organised through the Wardrobe. Consequently, the twenty-one ships that are missing from the payrolls should be added to the 1338 transport fleet.⁷⁸ The absence of twenty-one vessels, and not all the sixty-four, can be explained by the method of punishment imposed on the owners and master of the vessels involved. In order to be forgiven for this act of plunder, these ships' crews had to re-pay the owners of the attacked vessel £16,527 17s 1d as compensation for their losses. It seems likely that the ships struck out of the final payroll failed to honour this agreement.⁷⁹

Turning now to the overall numbers of vessels and mariners listed by Norwell as receiving pay for their involvement in the transportation of Edward's army, in a recent article Bryce Lyon suggested that 370 vessels were requisitioned for the purpose of transports.⁸⁰ Manning this fleet were 12,263 masters, mariners and other maritime personnel. Closer inspection of the *vadia nautarum* reveals the names of 340 individual ships in the transport fleet. Of these 340 ships 165 have been recorded with only the number of days they served and not exact dates of service, but, as was pointed out previously, these details can be gleaned from the surviving Exchequer particulars.⁸¹ All these ships were in active service

⁷⁸ Of course it could be argued that these ships should be subtracted from the transport fleet, this would make the fleet smaller than the one recorded in the tables. However, it is important to bear in mind that the figures provided in this book are given as impressions of the fleet sizes and are not an accurate rendering of their true size

⁷⁹ It is also important to note that in 1342 only eighty-eight ships out of 230 forfeited all of their pay. As such different punishments were meted out to different shipmasters. The twelve ships and masters that still appear in the Wardrobe Book, but participated in the piracy incident, must have made some compensation payments. Although it would not be unreasonable to argue that the government punished individual shipmasters and shipowners in various ways with the result that some received pay, while others did not. This is exactly what occurred during the 1342 expedition.

⁸⁰ B. Lyon, 'Infrastructure and purpose', p. 67. It has to be noted that in his introduction to Norwell's Wardrobe book Lyon gives a different number: 361 ships. See Norwell, p. ciii.

⁸¹ E101/21/7; E101/21/10; E101/21/21.

throughout June until early August 1338.⁸² In addition to the ships that participated in the transport fleet, Norwell's account includes nineteen further vessels that are recorded under the heading of individual magnates' names and other prominent personalities involved in the Low Countries expeditions, such as William de la Pole.⁸³ Six of these ships were involved in the transportation of William Montagu and William de Bohun. Montagu owned four of these six ships and these presumably transported him along with his retinue to Flanders. This assumption is based on the names of the vessels, three of which incorporate Montagu's name.⁸⁴ A total of 420 masters, constables and mariners manned these six ships. The remainder of the thirteen vessels in this section of the Wardrobe book were involved in various aspects of the campaign. For example, the two ships owned by de la Pole were utilised for the freighting of the king's wool to Brabant, while the barge, the *Spinnace*, and a ship simply described as the *magna nave* under the command of Robert Camerario, were employed during the spring of 1340 to guard the sea.⁸⁵

Considering the evidence detailed above, if we include the fifty-seven ships absent from Norwell's final accounts and the vessels enrolled under the magnate's names, the number of vessels involved in the transportation of the king's army in 1338 rises to 403 ships.⁸⁶ Manning these vessels were 13,346 masters, constables, mariners, carpenters, clerks and pages.⁸⁷ But how many men and horses did these 403 ships have to transport to the Low Countries in 1338? It has been calculated that the contingents of men taken by Edward III to Antwerp in 1338 numbered 1,400 men-at-arms, 2,500 archers and an indeterminate number of Welsh infantry.⁸⁸ These land-based contingents probably brought over with

⁸² See Norwell, p. ciii, for an investigation on the numbers of ships that served at particular periods.

⁸³ Norwell, p. 384.

⁸⁴ For example, one of the ships was called the *Cristofre Mountagu*, while another was named the *Magdaleyne Mountagu*. The two vessels recorded under the name of the earl of Northampton were both from the port of Ipswich, but their dates of service run for four months after the king had sailed, see Norwell, p. 384.

⁸⁵ Norwell, p. 385.

⁸⁶ It could be argued that the twenty-one ships that were struck out of the Wardrobe book did not take part in the 1338 transport fleet, with the result that the fleet would have numbered some 382 vessels.

⁸⁷ The ports situated south and west of the Thames supplied 204 (50.8%) ships operated by 7,105 (53.2%) maritime personnel. While the ports located north and east of the Thames contributed 199 (49.2%) vessels manned by 6,241 (46.7%) seamen. Yet by far the largest single supplier of ships was the port of Great Yarmouth, which provided sixty-one vessels (15.2%) operated by 2,574 (19.2%) sailors. Indeed, this port contributed more vessels to the fleet than were recorded through the Exchequer because several ships were struck out of the final payroll as punishment for their involvement in the act of piracy discussed earlier.

⁸⁸ A. Ayton, 'The English aristocracy', p. 179. Dr Ayton points out the difficulty of drawing firm conclusions about the service of the Welsh foot during the campaigns of 1339.

them anywhere up to 10,000 horses, including those specifically required for baggage and haulage.⁸⁹ Therefore, each of the 403 vessels of the transport fleet of 1338 would have had to freight, on average, twelve men (this includes a rough estimate of 1,000 Welsh foot) and twenty-five horses. This is an entirely reasonable estimate that the ships of the period, especially when gathered in such large numbers, could have achieved.

In conclusion, in 1338 the first transport fleet of the Hundred Years War, numbered 403 ships, manned by 13,346 maritime personnel. The ports south and west of the Thames provided the majority of the ships and the manpower for the armada. The dates of service of these vessels also show that this fleet sailed as one large convoy to Antwerp so as to discourage any French aggression. These 403 ships transported roughly 5,000 land-based personnel. In all, despite the vagaries of the communication network, the operation was most efficiently managed.

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After Edward disembarked at Antwerp in July 1338 he began a frustrating stay in the Low Countries in which he had to cajole his allies into beginning the campaign. It was not until the following year that Edward's large coalition moved into the field. Thus began a march of destruction that although intended to draw a hesitant Philip VI into battle actually ended in an indecisive standoff. Nevertheless, on 24 June 1340 Edward did get the battle he craved, but not on land directly facing his enemy Philip VI, but at sea in the harbour of Sluys. The fleet that Edward took charge of, and which subsequently sailed to Sluys on 22 June, was the second of the Low Countries transport armadas. Unfortunately, owing to the absence of a complete set of payrolls for the naval contingent, the size of the fleet that Edward entered the battle with on the afternoon of 24 June has caused problems for historians. Indeed, the 1340 fleet is puzzling in terms of not only how it was raised and paid for, but also why there is a gap in the payroll evidence. The fact that an estimated 150 ships are absent from the relevant payroll is an intriguing mystery. This being said it is possible to explain why there is an absence in the pay records and by doing so can we provide some clues the eventual size of the fleet that engaged the French armada.

There are several possible explanations that can be postulated as to why we are lacking a full set of pay details of this fleet. Perhaps the most likely of these relates to the way in which the mariners were eventually paid for this campaign. In 1340 Edward had struggled to requisition a fleet of sufficient size and it is

⁸⁹ The amount of victuals transported over with the army in the Low Countries campaigns amounted to roughly 4,000 quarters of grain and various quantities of meat. If we suggest that it would take four horses to freight one cart loaded with four quarters of wheat, then it would have required some 1,000 horses for the baggage train. The principle seems to have been one horse per quarter, see J. Masschaele, 'Transport costs', p. 269.

possible that ad hoc arrangements and guarantees were made to shipowners with regard to the payments that would be made to the crews of the participating vessels.⁹⁰ We also know that the king claimed to have captured 190 ships from the French fleet during the engagement at Sluys.⁹¹ The prize money from such a large number of captured vessels would certainly have been a considerable sum. This could have been used in various ways. For example, the ships' crews could have taken their share of the booty and this could have been given in lieu of their wages or, indeed, could have replaced their wages altogether, thus removing the need to include these ships in the usual payrolls. The mariners of a ship that had captured a prize at sea were entitled to one-quarter share of the booty. The king could claim one quarter and the owners of the vessel another quarter. The admiral of the fleet had the right to a proportion of the booty, usually amounting to two captors' shares if he participated in the engagement and one if he did not.⁹² This being so the whole system of dividing prizes taken during maritime engagements was still very much in flux during this period. For example, in 1319 Edward II allowed the east coast vessels serving in his fleet to retain all the booty they captured from Scottish shipping. Similarly, in 1336 the king again granted to his sailors all that they could capture at sea. This trend continued and in the fifteenth century it was usually the practice to allow private ships to keep the gains made through attacking enemy vessels.⁹³ Of course, the mariners should still have received their wages, as the right to prize was an additional bonus. Yet the king had prerogatives he could enforce in order to gain more than the quarter he would normally take.⁹⁴ Further, it should be recalled that during this campaign Edward was desperately short of funds and he may well have used the captured ships as a means of meeting some of his debts.⁹⁵ It is likely that Edward would have sold these captured ships to his allies, the Flemings, and set the money he gained through doing so against his mounting debts. That

⁹⁰ J. S. Kepler, 'The effects of Sluys on naval impressment', pp. 73–74.

⁹¹ N. H. Nicolas, *History of the royal navy*, II, p. 61, which prints a letter written by Edward to his son after the battle in which the king claims to have captured 190 ships; M. Prestwich, *Armies and warfare*, p. 278.

⁹² T. J. Runyan, 'The English navy in the reign of Edward III', p. 161; *Black book of the admiralty*, ed. Sir T. Twiss (London, 1871), I, 20–21, articles 18 and 19.

⁹³ See R. G. Marsden, 'Early prize jurisdiction and prize law in England', *EHR* 25 (1909), pp. 675–97, pp. 675–76.

⁹⁴ B. E. R. Formoy, 'A maritime indenture of 1212', *EHR* 41 (1926), pp. 556–59. But, see also N. H. Nicolas, *History of the royal navy*, I, p. 140, who states that, 'ships and goods captured from the enemy became part of the property of the king; but prize money seems to have been as ancient as the English navy itself, though the amount depended entirely on the sovereign's bounty'.

⁹⁵ It was not unknown for the king to award captured ships to persons who paid money directly to him. This was usually described as the king giving favour to a particular individual. However, it is more likely that these payments were in fact bribes of a sort. See R. G. Marsden, *Law and custom of the sea*, I, pp. 104–05.

there is no evidence in the records of the sale of these ships should come as no surprise, because the king's gains through ransoms rarely left a mark in the administrative accounts.⁹⁶ What is striking, however, is that two years after the battle several ships' crews that participated in the encounter had still not received their wages.⁹⁷ This shows that there was a chronic shortage of funds during 1340.

Another possible explanation for an absence of a payroll could be that the mariners were paid in the form of consignments of wool. We know that after the collapse of the wool scheme the king took control of what had been deposited in the staple.⁹⁸ He could have used this wool as a means of payment in lieu of wages to both soldiers and mariners. Yet it is more likely that this wool was used to set against debts that had accumulated over the two years he had spent on the continent, an interpretation that is reinforced by the lack of evidence in the Chancery rolls of wool shipments given over to mariners in place of their wages. Perhaps the most intriguing of the possible explanations of the missing payroll for the Sluys fleet relates to the absence of a surviving Wardrobe book. It is known that after Norwell had completed his term of office William Cusance replaced him as keeper.⁹⁹ There is no indication that Cusance summarised his transactions as keeper into a Wardrobe book that was then sent to the Exchequer for audit, which may explain the survival of the household journal roll for the Sluys campaign.¹⁰⁰ Such documents do not always exist for other keepers, such as William Edington, suggesting that they were discarded when a full set of accounts were sent to the Exchequer. It is therefore possible that there was a separate journal roll for the Sluys campaign, including a section on mariners' wages that has since been lost. In part this latter document would have been an early draft of the *vadia nautarum*. It is noteworthy that on the surviving journal roll there is a membrane that records the wages paid to the sheriffs, bailiffs and other officers of the maritime counties for arresting ships for the transport fleet.¹⁰¹ It is beyond doubt that these officials would have arrested ships for the armada and these vessels must have been recorded elsewhere. It is possible that the royal ships that are enrolled on the journal roll were accounted for separately

⁹⁶ For an enlightening discussion on ransoms gained from prisoners of war and the difficulty in calculating the returns gained by the king in such agreements, see C. Given-Wilson, 'Edward III's prisoners of war: the battle of Poitiers and its context', *EHR* 116 (2001), pp. 802–33. Given-Wilson notes that although what Edward paid the person who had captured one of the enemy is sometimes recorded on the Issue Rolls he also observes that 'it is no easy task to discover the amounts for which Edward III eventually ransomed the prisoners whom he had acquired', p. 817.

⁹⁷ The crews manning the ships of King's Lynn at the battle were still waiting for their wages in April 1342, see CCR, 1341–43, pp. 556–57.

⁹⁸ See C. J. Rogers, *War cruel and sharp*, pp. 146–54.

⁹⁹ Tout, *Chapters*, VI, p. 27.

¹⁰⁰ E101/389/8.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, m. 6.

and that is why they appear in that pay account.¹⁰² This would not be unusual because the royal vessels that fought at Sluys are also visible on the account compiled by Thomas Snetesham.¹⁰³

The survival of the journal roll becomes important when we note a piece of evidence that is hinted at by one of the many chronicle accounts of the battle. This notes that the ship carrying the king's Wardrobe was attacked, captured and all the crew except one woman and two men put to death.¹⁰⁴ On board this ship could have been documents that related to the first phases of the fleet-raising procedure, such as the ship lists mentioned in Chapter 1. If the French had captured or destroyed these lists, the Wardrobe would have had no means of accurately recording all the vessels involved in the engagement. The payments owing to the mariners for their wages would therefore have been made in a much less formal and fully recorded way than normal. The survival of the journal roll for this campaign could well be linked to this incident. Finally, another possibility is that because of the hurried nature of the requisition process in the weeks preceding the battle it is possible that the admirals paid the wages of several ships' crews out of their own pockets, or some other procedure, and that the crown 'returned' these sums to them after the battle. This would in part explain why on 15 July 1340 Robert Morley, admiral of the north, was paid £1,100 'in recompense due to him'.¹⁰⁵ As such perhaps the fleet of 1340 was raised and paid for by a mixture of private initiatives and booty gained from the battle.

The loss of the Sluys payroll has resulted in the fact that most historians have generally relied on the estimates of chroniclers for the size of the fleet.¹⁰⁶ Yet these chronicle estimates are far from consistent. C. J. Rogers, for example, follows the estimate of the Lanercost chronicle, which puts the fleet at somewhere between 120 and 147 vessels.¹⁰⁷ However, the *Meaux* chronicle and *Polychronicon* suggest that the armada numbered 200 ships, while Le Baker and Murimuth have much higher estimates totalling 260 ships.¹⁰⁸ N. A. M. Rodger has suggested that the Sluys fleet could have numbered up to 320 vessels; but he

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, m. 16.

¹⁰³ E101/22/38.

¹⁰⁴ *Hemingburgh*, II, p. 357.

¹⁰⁵ *CPR*, 1340–43, p. 12. G. R. Cushway, 'The lord of sea', p. 314 interprets this order slightly different and suggests that Morley had been granted this money as a reward for his services at Sluys. However, it seems more likely that he was given this money because he had expended some of his own personal money (as did many of Edward III's captains) on mariner's wages. Indeed, the grant of venison for the rest of his life recorded in the same order is more likely to be the reward of his services.

¹⁰⁶ For example T. J. Runyan, 'Feeding Mars', p. 98; H. S. Lucas, *Low Countries and the hundred years war, 1326–1347* (Philadelphia, 1976), pp. 283, 398.

¹⁰⁷ C. J. Rogers, *War cruel and sharp*, p. 192; *Lanercost*, p. 333; J. S. Kepler, 'The effects of the battle of Sluys', pp. 74–75 favours Baker's estimate of 260 ships.

¹⁰⁸ *Melsa*, III, p. 44; *Polychronicon*, p. 335; *Baker*, p. 68; *Murimuth*, p. 105.

seems to have mistaken the 1338 transport fleet with that of 1340, as the source he cites is the Wardrobe accounts of Norwell.¹⁰⁹ In fact the only vessels serving in 1340 that are recorded by Norwell remained in service throughout the year, these being the king's ships and those that appear under the sub-headings of individual magnates. Given the fact that Murimuth provides accurate information regarding the Brittany transport fleets, and bearing in mind the size of the land contingents transported in June 1340, a fleet of 200 ships would seem to be of the right magnitude.¹¹⁰

The absence of a full payroll, however, does not mean that we are completely ignorant of the ships that participated in the engagement at Sluys. There are several important Exchequer accounts that detail the names of some of the ships and masters involved.¹¹¹ By using these we can piece together the fleet of 1340. The preparations for the fleet had begun in the spring of 1340, when in March the sheriffs and bailiffs of the maritime counties were paid 30s 6d for arresting ships from forty-three ports.¹¹² Interestingly, in 1340 Robert de Causton, sheriff of Suffolk, found that there were 155 individuals within his bailiwick who could contribute 177 ships to a fleet.¹¹³ Unfortunately, the document appears to have no more precise date attached to it than 1340, so it is difficult to know if it was compiled before or after the battle of Sluys.¹¹⁴ However, from the available sources, which we can date to the battle of Sluys we can account for sixty-six individual ships, by name, which participated in the engagement.

The first account records twenty-seven ships that were provided by the men of Great Yarmouth and which served from 19 May to 28 June 1340; operating these vessels were 1,335 masters, constables and mariners.¹¹⁵ Ostensibly these vessels were arrested as supply ships, but as the king gained knowledge that the French had assembled an armada to blockade his re-entry into the Low Countries they formed part of the battle fleet that Edward was now preparing. The second payroll records the wages paid to twenty-three ships. Eight were the king's personal vessels, including the *Cog Thomas*, which Edward himself sailed in, and a ship called the *Cog Montagu*, which was owned by the earl of Salisbury. Apart from the *Cog Thomas*, which served for ninety-seven days, all the other

¹⁰⁹ N. A. M. Rodger, *Safeguard of the sea*, pp. 492–97 and the section headed 'sources'.

¹¹⁰ On Murimuth's estimate for the size of the Brittany fleet and his accuracy, see C. L. Lambert, 'An army transport fleet', pp. 22–25.

¹¹¹ E101/21/31; E101/21/33; E101/22/25; E101/22/30; E101/22/31; E101/22/38; E101/389/8, m. 16.

¹¹² E101/389/8, m. 6. Thirteen of these ports were located on the east coast while the remainder were situated south and west of the Thames.

¹¹³ C47/2/32, mm. 1–4. Given that the king sailed from a Suffolk port it is tempting to link this document to the battle. However, it is simply a list of those who could supply ships and not a list of those that definitely did.

¹¹⁴ The document is dated 14 Edward III.

¹¹⁵ E101/22/25, mm. 1–4.

vessels' recorded in this account served from 24 June for a period of between nine and twenty-six days. Manning these ships were 1,011 masters, constables, clerks and mariners. Yet the largest crew compliment was that aboard the *Cog Montagu*, whose 124 mariners even outnumbered the crew aboard the king's flagship.¹¹⁶

The remainder of the evidence for the ships that can be known by name to have participated in the battle can be gleaned from five further Exchequer particulars and two chronicle accounts. One of the Exchequer accounts records the wages paid to the sailors of two ships provided by Thomas and William Melcheburn of King's Lynn.¹¹⁷ Further evidence for ships that participated in the engagement comes from a pair of indentures. The first of these was issued on behalf of Richard Fille, but he is known from the Sluys payroll (E101/389/8). However, the second indenture contains the names of eight further royal ships, one of which, the *Barge de Abeville*, is not recorded on the Sluys payroll.¹¹⁸ In the indenture we are not given the crew size of this vessel, but the same ship appears in another account, and that does provide the exact crew details.¹¹⁹ A further vessel that participated in the battle, but not enrolled in any other document, is also recorded on this same Exchequer account: the *Margrete*, commanded by Ralph Wiwynch with six mariners.¹²⁰ Another Exchequer document provides more than a glimpse of another ship that was at Sluys. The interesting point about this document is that enrolled with the ship's details is a full crew list. This vessel was called the *Godbefor*, commanded by John Halfknight, and manned by forty-five mariners including the constable Richard de Hilderburworthe.¹²¹

The final piece of evidence concerning the ships known to have been involved in the June transport fleet comes from an account compiled by John Watenhul on behalf of the earl of Warwick. The original plan was for Warwick to leave England with the earl of Oxford at the end of March. This equates with the requisition orders, which appear on the Sluys payroll. Yet the vessels for Warwick were not arrested until the end of April. In addition, the evidence from the *vadia guerre* account for the army suggests that Warwick was present at the battle of Sluys, and so we must conclude that the ships enrolled by Watenhul were those that transported Warwick with the June fleet.¹²² As such the eight vessels that appear on this account should be added to the fleet that engaged the French.¹²³

¹¹⁶ E101/389/8, m. 16.

¹¹⁷ E101/21/33. The ships were the *Magdeleyne*, operated by eighty mariners, and the *Seintemaricog*, which was manned by sixty seamen. They both served from 15 May to 28 July.

¹¹⁸ E101/22/31. These indentures are repeated in E101/20/39, nos 80, 113.

¹¹⁹ John Giboun commanded the ship with a crew of thirty mariners.

¹²⁰ E101/22/38, m. 1.

¹²¹ E101/22/30.

¹²² For Warwick's service dates at this time, see A. Ayton, 'Edward III and the English aristocracy', p. 176 n. 36.

¹²³ E101/22/39. Manning these eight ships was a total of 297 masters, constables and mariners. All eight ships were supplied by ports located on the east coast.

Of these sixty-six ships that participated in the battle of Sluys, which we can name individually from payroll evidence, the ports north of the Thames supplied forty. The king's ships, including Montagu's, accounted for fourteen vessels (this is because four more of Montagu's ships appear in Norwell's Wardrobe book with dates of service that suggest they participated in the battle).¹²⁴ Manning these sixty-six ships was 3,120 maritime personnel, with 1,772 (56.7%) of these men being contributed by the ports north of the Thames, while the ports south and west of the Thames provided 1,348 (43%) mariners (including the king's and Montagu's ships).¹²⁵ In addition to the payroll evidence, we can add a further five ships to the English fleet of June 1340, bringing the known number of ships to seventy-one.¹²⁶ Of course these figures assume that ships from the northern fleet were manned by mariners located in that admiralty. This is the most likely scenario although it should be stressed that during the preparations for an expedition it is likely that mariners from the northern admiralty may have been added to ships from the southern admiralty.¹²⁷ In the absence of better data however it is best to assume that ships from the northern fleet were manned by mariners from that admiralty, and vice versa.

It is beyond doubt that more vessels than this were present at the battle on the English side. We know, for example, that King's Lynn supplied ships for the fleet but without comprehensive surviving payroll evidence we have to fall back on the chronicle estimates.¹²⁸ We know too that Edward transported 1,300 men-at-arms and 1,000 archers in June 1340.¹²⁹ Bearing in mind that the previous fleet of 1338 numbered 403 ships and had to transport 5,000 men, then a fair estimate

¹²⁴ The ports south and west of the Thames can only be shown to have contributed three ships to the fleet. But thirteen of the vessels are not recorded with any port of origin.

¹²⁵ The remaining 355 were operating the ships, which were accorded no port of origin.

¹²⁶ *Hemingburgh*, II, p. 357, notes a galley of Hull being involved in the battle; *French chronicle of London*, p. 77, mentions a ship of London provided by William Hansard. However, Hansard actually contributed three ships to the Sluys fleet and these were the *Jonette*, the *Cogge of All Hallows* and the *Seintemarcog*: see G. Milne, *The port of medieval London* (Stroud, 2003) p. 116. There was also a ship of Sandwich involved in the engagement contributed by the prior of Christchurch, see H. S. Lucas, *The Low Countries and the hundred years' war*, p. 400.

¹²⁷ During the preparations for the St Sardos expedition mariners were admitted to ships while they were in the port of embarkation. This suggests that these men were not the 'normal' crew that would operate these vessels. What is interesting though is that of the nineteen ships that mariners added to their existing crews while they waited at Southampton, only one vessel was from the northern admiralty, see BL, Add MS 7967, fols 95v–97v.

¹²⁸ CCR, 1341–43, pp. 557–58.

¹²⁹ A. Ayton, 'Edward III and the English aristocracy', p. 176. G. R. Cushway, 'The lord of the sea', pp. 308–09 gives the much higher number of 10 earls, 49 bannerets, 589 knights, 1,012 armed men, 7,590 archers and 12,000 mariners. For this he relies on the evidence recorded on C47/2/33. However, Cushway seems to be unaware that the *vadia guerre* for the Sluys army exists in E101/389/8.

for the size of the Sluys fleet would be along the lines of Murimuth's and Baker's testimony: that is in the region of 200 to 260 ships.¹³⁰ This would place, on average, between eight and fifteen men on each ship for transportation purposes. Of course, we know from the accounts compiled after the war of St Sardos that the ships in a transport flotilla would normally be separated into those specifically fitted out to carry horses and those for the freighting of the men, but this would not have affected the Sluys fleet because before it departed Edward had removed the horses from the ships.¹³¹ In addition, Edward had sighted the French fleet twenty-four hours before he engaged them.¹³² One suspects that Edward placed all of his men on a smaller number of ships with which he could press forward the attack with vigour. This would ensure superior numbers of men-at-arms and archers would be brought to bear against the less specialised combatants likely to be manning the French ships. But precisely how many ships from the English fleet actually engaged the French remains a mystery. It has been suggested that the English fleet would have formed up with the men-at-arms standing on the ships in the centre, whilst the archers would be placed in the vessels that offered flanking positions.¹³³ This argument seems to follow on from Froissart's suggestion that archers usually formed up on the flanks with men-at-arms in the centre. This interpretation has recently been challenged, however, and it has been suggested that archers were probably dispersed amongst the men-at-arms, although some archers would naturally find themselves on the flanks of the army.¹³⁴ Evidence from contemporary manuscripts, which show ships containing both archers and men-at-arms, certainly corroborates this idea.¹³⁵ Such positions would ensure that before grappling with the enemy English archery was brought to bear at the point where it was most needed, and in effect 'softened' the target for the men-at-arms. Indeed, it is doubtful what impact archers would have been placed on the flanks. The result of this would be that some French vessels faced some ships full of archers and other only containing men-at-arms. Finally, it is also known that at some point during the battle the Flemings also attacked the

¹³⁰ If the list of 163 ships that Robert Causton could provide did indeed sail in the Sluys fleet then when these are added to the seventy-one known ships the overall number of vessels involved would come remarkably close to Murimuth's and Baker's testimony.

¹³¹ C.J. Rogers, *War cruel and sharp*, p. 190.

¹³² *French chronicle of London*, p. 76.

¹³³ T. J. Runyan, 'The cog as a warship', in *Cogs, caravels and Galleons*, pp. 54–55 states that Edward 'placed his most powerful ships in the van'. See also G. R. Cushway, 'The lord of the sea', pp. 306–07 who also accepts this view.

¹³⁴ A. Ayton, P. Preston, *The battle of Crécy*, pp. 353–59.

¹³⁵ BL, Add MS 42130, fol. 161v. This shows men-at-arms and archers in the same vessels. The Beaumont Pageants also show archers and men-at-arms aboard the same vessels, see BL, Cotton MS, Julius E.IV, fols 18v, 25v. Also, see J. Flatman, *Ships and shipping in medieval manuscripts* (London, 2009), pp. 93–105, which shows a variety of contemporary representations of archers in ships.

French vessels from their rear, thus adding more ships to the allied contingent during the engagement.¹³⁶

If we now take all the evidence together and calculate the numbers of ships that participated in both of the Low Countries campaigns, we find that a known 474 vessels manned by 16,556 mariners were involved in the transportation of soldiers and the battle of Sluys.¹³⁷ But the major obstacle to gaining a full understanding of the maritime contribution to the Low Countries campaigns is the lack of a full payroll for the 1340 ships. If we were to assume that this fleet numbered 260 ships, and only sixty-six of these can be identified, then there could have been as many as 630 individual vessels requisitioned for the use of transports during the two campaigns.¹³⁸ But without a full set of payrolls to compare both fleets this must remain speculative.

The evidence relating to the period 1324–40 suggests, therefore, that Edward III's continental aspirations were on a much grander scale than his father's. Indeed, Table 3.1 below shows that between the years 1338 and 1340 Edward III's officials requisitioned over twice the number of ships that Edward II's clerks had for the St Sardos expeditions. In fact if we consider that the St Sardos fleets were two separate flotillas, and that the largest number of ships raised before 1338 for any single continental expedition were the 163 vessels involved in the earl of Surrey's transport flotilla of 1325, a marked increase can be seen in the demands for shipping in the twelve years from 1325 to 1338. This is especially true when we also consider that ships were still being deployed in the Scottish theatre of operations.

¹³⁶ C. J. Rogers, *War cruel and sharp*, p. 197.

¹³⁷ The ports north and east of the Thames contributed 8,103 (49.2%) mariners, while those ports located to the south and west of the Thames provided 8,453 (51%) mariners. The actual number of individual ships was 448 because by comparing all the payrolls, Exchequer accounts and Chancery evidence, we find that twenty-four ships serving in the 1338 fleet also participated in the Sluys fleet. The methodology on individual ships is discussed more fully in Appendix 2.

¹³⁸ Although we know the name of three of William Hansard's ships we do not know who commanded them, therefore it is impossible to compare them to other ships in the Low Countries campaigns to see if Hansard's vessels had previously served in the 1338 London ships.

Table 3.1 The fleets of St Sardos, 1338 and 1340

Campaign	Ships	Northern ships	Southern ships (inc. Royal ships)	Number of ports	Number of mariners
St Sardos	301	105	195	52	4,488
Low Countries	474	239	235	78	16,556

Note: The figures in the table do not take account of individual ships. This issue is analysed more fully in Chapter 4. The aim of the table is to show the total size of the fleets put into operation. In the St Sardos fleets one vessel was foreign: the *St Mary*, from Spain and commanded by Fernando de Faim, see BL, Add MS 7967, fol. 98r. This includes the 1324 and 1325 fleets.

*

The sources relating to the 1342 expedition are complex, and a large amount of comparative analysis is required. Such an examination of the sources, however, reveals that the logistical problems faced throughout this campaign in Brittany, and the changes in fleet-raising procedure that they prompted, make the first English intervention in the duchy perhaps one of the most influential expeditions launched by Edward III. The main issue was that in 1342 the English crown faced, for the first time, the problem of requisitioning more than one transport fleet simultaneously. In addition, a number of factors, both external and internal, changed the course of English involvement within Brittany. Raids by the Scots into northern England and events in the Breton civil war itself forced the English king to transport his army in three stages.¹³⁹ The first to sail was Walter Mauny in March 1342, followed by the earl of Northampton in August and the king in October. By examining the preparations in the summer of 1342 it can be seen that the crown was attempting to create a ferry fleet system by utilising the same ships on three occasions. Thus the ships that formed the earl of Northampton's transport fleet were ordered to return to freight the forced under the king.¹⁴⁰ In addition, the armada waiting to transport the earls of Oxford and Pembroke also suffered from some problems, not least because the fleet waiting at Plymouth seems to have been too small to transport the force that was to serve with the earls. This resulted in the king seconding two vessels from the Plymouth flotilla to serve in his own fleet later in the year.¹⁴¹ The remaining fifty-five ships could only transport the 800 Welsh foot. Yet, it is even doubtful that many of the

¹³⁹ For a discussion of the possible strategies of the Brittany campaign and how these were affected by the availability of sufficient numbers of ships, in addition to other factors involved in the preparations for the expedition, see C. Lambert, 'An army transport fleet', pp. 1–13. On the Breton situation, see M. Jones, *The creation of Brittany* (London, 1988); *idem*, *Ducal Brittany, 1364–1399: relations with England and France during the reign of duke John IV* (Oxford, 1970); *idem*, 'Edward III's captains in Brittany, 1343–45', in *England in the fourteenth century*, ed. W. M. Ormrod (Woodbridge, 1986).

¹⁴⁰ CCR, 1341–43, p. 651.

¹⁴¹ CCR, 1341–43, p. 651; E101/23/22 records the fifty-seven ships waiting to transport the two earls. The two vessels which were transferred to the king's fleet were the *Blythe* of Great

Welsh eventually disembarked in Brittany as 600 were forced to take refuge on the Isles of Scilly, due to a storm, and the remaining 200 only served for twelve days until 19 November.¹⁴² These issues show that the English administration was grappling with a complex logistical problem with the result that three fleets eventually sailed during 1342 with each flotilla consisting of vessels from the previous armada.

The resulting administrative procedures designed to manage the logistical process has left behind a series of problematic sources. This is especially so with regard to both the earl of Northampton's and the king's fleets. For example, in the *vadia nautarum* of William Edington only sixteen ships are recorded as having received pay for the earl's crossing.¹⁴³ Considering that Northampton had in the region of 1,100 men under his command, this number of ships is too small for their transportation. Murimuth on the other hand states that the earl's transport fleet numbered some 260 vessels, which seems a more realistic indication of its true size.¹⁴⁴ This apparent and sizeable lacuna in Edington's accounts can be compensated for by examining other, related source material; particularly the evidence recorded in the Chancery enrolments and calendared documents. Indeed, close scrutiny of the Chancery documents and related Exchequer accounts reveals the size and composition of the earl's transport fleet. As noted those ships participating in the earl's flotilla were required to return to England to transport the king. However, at least thirty-one vessels failed to honour that demand and as a punishment they forfeited their pay and were thus struck out of Edington's final accounts.¹⁴⁵ A further problem encountered by the king and Northampton was that after the earl had disembarked in Brest, numerous vessels left Brittany and headed for Gascony to load up with wine. While some had been given permission to do this many had not. Again, the offending ships' crews were penalised by forfeiting their wages.¹⁴⁶ The fact that Northampton authorised some ships to travel to Bordeaux shows that there was not a shortage of sailing craft during 1342; otherwise the earl would have steadfastly refused permission for any vessel to sail to Gascony.¹⁴⁷

Yarmouth, commanded by Thomas le Smyth, and the *Seintemarie* of Ipswich, commanded by Robert Asshe, see E36/204, pp. 224, 232, 234 for their service in the king's fleet.

¹⁴² The two earls never sailed to Brittany; however, a small contingent of the foot under their command did attempt a crossing. It also seems that the Welsh foot made it no further than the Isles of Scilly. See CPR, 1343–45, p. 494; E101/23/22 m. 3 details the dates of service of the Welsh. But see also A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, p. 259 and Table A, p. 263.

¹⁴³ E36/204, p. 238.

¹⁴⁴ Murimuth, p. 126.

¹⁴⁵ CCR, 1341–43, pp. 621, 651–52, 664, 688, 697–98.

¹⁴⁶ CCR, 1342–43, p. 688.

¹⁴⁷ Although these orders create the appearance that Edward was failing to find sufficient ships (hence why Northampton's transport ships were asked to return) this would be the wrong way to view these demands. In fact looked at differently what they provide evidence for is the argument above.

In addition to those ships that were struck off the payrolls a further forty vessels served in Northampton's transport fleet in return for pardons. Thirty-three of these were involved in the 'Taryte affair'. This act of piracy was discussed in Chapter 1.¹⁴⁸ The warrants accompanying the offer of these pardons were all dated to 28 May 1342, so it must be assumed that these ships did serve in the August armada that transported the earl of Northampton. This interpretation is reinforced by one order stating any ships from Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn that were involved in the incident are 'to go to Orwell for the passage of the said earl of Northampton and other lieges to Brittany, with victuals and necessities'.¹⁴⁹ Yet there are interpretational difficulties with regard to the thirty-two ships visible in the calendared sources. For example, the shipmaster/owner Nicholas Pyk was certainly serving with more than one vessel but, unfortunately, no precise details are provided that show the number of ships that he served with.¹⁵⁰ Similarly, in another warrant five shipmasters from Ipswich are mentioned, all of whom plundered the *Taryte*, but the names of their vessels are not recorded with them.¹⁵¹ This creates problems when the ship *Katerine* from Ipswich, but not its master, is named elsewhere as being involved in the attack against the *Taryte*.¹⁵² Is it to be assumed that this ship is one of the infamous five vessels? It is impossible to say, but for the purposes of this book it has been counted as a separate vessel. All the pardons relating to the Ipswich ships were dated 17 July 1342 and it must therefore be presumed that these vessels participated in the earl of Northampton's expedition. Furthermore, another seven ships are visible in the pardons recorded among the *Ancient Correspondence*.¹⁵³ Thus, using the calendared and Chancery sources we can add forty ships to the sixteen recorded in the Wardrobe accounts.

The final piece to the puzzle of the earl of Northampton's transport fleet can be found in two Exchequer accounts dated to 1342. One is a document compiled by John de Watenhul for his expenses in arresting 117 ships from the ports between Portsmouth and Bristol during April 1342.¹⁵⁴ The second Exchequer source records a further 145 ships, which were enrolled on the pipe roll of 1342.¹⁵⁵ These 145 ships received payments in July to keep them in port so that they would not leave before the army was ready to be transported. It is likely that

¹⁴⁸ CCR, 1341-43, pp. 499, 501, 502, 529, 554, 621; CPR, 1340-43, pp. 433, 471, 477, 483, 491-92, 513, 538, 594.

¹⁴⁹ CCR, 1341-43, p. 501.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 529.

¹⁵¹ CPR, 1340-43, p. 477.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 594.

¹⁵³ SC1/39, nos 93, 157; SC1/40, nos 10-20; SC1/41, no. 66. These pardons are analysed more fully in Chapter 4.

¹⁵⁴ E101/22/39.

¹⁵⁵ E372/187, mm. 42, 48.

these 145 vessels are included in the 117 arrested by Watenhul earlier in the year and that these would have formed the earl of Northampton's fleet.

The fact Northampton sailed ahead of the king can be put down to several reasons, the main one being that by August the position of the Montfortist Bretons had deteriorated seriously, and urgent reinforcements were required to bolster them. Added to this was the fact that all the ships currently under arrest in England had been requisitioned for several months, and it was feared that these vessels would sail away from the embarkation port. Thus the decision was made to send Northampton ahead of the main force, the intention being that the ships that transported him would return to form part of the king's fleet later in the year.

Evidence recorded in the *vadia nautarum* relating to the king's transport fleet also appears less than wholly satisfactory. There we find 378 ships' crews receiving wages for the passage of the king and his army in October 1342.¹⁵⁶ However, there are also 230 'deserter' vessels recorded on the *Close Rolls* to consider.¹⁵⁷ These are ships that left Brest and Vannes in October and November without permission from the king and whose crews as a consequence forfeited their pay. These punishments are further evidenced by comparison with the Wardrobe Book. This reveals that eighty-eight ships listed in the *Close Rolls* are absent from the final Wardrobe accounts. Indeed, when the mariners' pay details recorded in the Wardrobe book are examined more closely it is noticeable that 142 ships were docked pay, presumably as a punishment for deserting the king. For example, the *Clement* of London, commanded by John Blakeson, and manned by twelve mariners, received just over £5 in wages when the dates of service assigned to the ship show that the crew's pay should have totalled £8 10s.¹⁵⁸ In short the crews of 142 ships were docked pay, while eighty-eight ships' crews received no pay at all.

Another important document relating to the king's transport fleet can now be found among the Chancery Miscellanea records at the National Archives.¹⁵⁹ This comes in the form of a ship list containing the names of 330 vessels, along with their masters, and grouped by their port of origin. The list records 144 ships from ports located north of the Thames and 186 from ports within the confines of the southern admiralty. The roll is a return by Edington for the wages of the ships' crews that transported the king and Walter Mauny to Brittany in October 1342. However, for several reasons this document is not quite what it seems. First, comparison with the *vadia nautarum* reveals that the roll lacks forty-eight ships that appear there. Second, five vessels that are listed on the roll are not recorded in the mariners pay accounts of the Wardrobe book.¹⁶⁰ Apart from these discrepancies, there are direct similarities between the two documents. The

¹⁵⁶ E36/204, pp. 221–40.

¹⁵⁷ CCR, 1343–46, pp. 128–32.

¹⁵⁸ E36/204, p. 221; CCR, 1343–46, p. 128.

¹⁵⁹ C47/2/35, mm. 1–5.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, mm. 4–5.

order of the ports listed on the Chancery roll is more or less the same as that recorded in the Wardrobe accounts. In addition, the same anomalies appear in both sources. For example, Henry Goldeneye, master of the *Godyer* of Rye, is repeated twice in both Edington's accounts and the Chancery roll.¹⁶¹ There are also slight differences between the two. One example is that in the Wardrobe accounts Edington records the home port of eighteen ships as Dover whereas the Chancery list places them in Sandwich.¹⁶² In addition, when the forty-eight ships that are recorded in the Wardrobe accounts, but not the Chancery miscellanea roll, are compared to the 230 'deserter' ships noted above we find that only six out of these forty-eight vessels are noted as deserters. This means that their absence from the Chancery roll cannot have been because they forfeited their pay.

A further important Exchequer account with relevance to the king's transport fleet is a compensation record of money paid to shipowners for the damage that their vessels incurred while on active service.¹⁶³ This account consists of two files with details of the payments issued. Only forty-five of these can be compared directly with the payroll contained in the Wardrobe accounts, as the other names recorded in this document are of the ships' owners and not their masters. The former are not listed in Edington's accounts. Of these forty-five ships and masters, thirty-two are recorded in the Wardrobe book and all these vessels completed their service in October and November 1342, which places them in the king's transport fleet. Again, the absence of thirteen ships from the final accounts is difficult to explain as none of these were among the deserter ships. Finally, evidence of one more ship that participated in the king's flotilla, though absent from the Wardrobe's final payroll accounts, can be gained by examining a collection of accounts compiled by Thomas Snetesham.¹⁶⁴ This source includes receipts for supplies of food and wages issued to mariners who served on board royal ships. Included are several indentures that record *prest* payments issued to mariners during the Brittany campaign. Examination of these receipts, and comparisons with the Wardrobe book, reveals that Cok Gold, master of the *Margret Spinnace*, is not included in Edington's final pay accounts, although the indenture recorded by Snetesham shows that he did participate in the Brittany transport fleet.

Taken together, the evidence from various Exchequer and Chancery documents allows us to propose a more accurate picture of the size and composition of all three Brittany transport armadas. The first fleet to sail was Walter Mauny's in the spring of 1342. The Wardrobe payroll accounts for this particular flotilla

¹⁶¹ E36/204, p. 229; C47/2/35, m. 2. Henry did not serve in two of the three fleets during 1342 and he only participated in the earl of Northampton's transport fleet. See also pp. 00–00 above.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 225; *ibid.*, m. 2. For a fuller explanation of why this confusion occurred, see Chapter 4, pp. 176–78.

¹⁶³ E101/24/9 (a) and (b).

¹⁶⁴ E101/22/38, no. 4.

are full and detailed and Mauny's fleet consisted of thirty-six ships operated by 931 masters and mariners.¹⁶⁵ Mauny had under his command 343 soldiers, so over twice as many mariners were required to operate the ships that transported his force over to Brittany. Mauny's small army consisted of 1 banneret, 21 knights, 111 esquires and 210 mounted archers. Taking this into consideration it is estimated that this force would have taken to Brittany roughly 600 horses; but if the horses of the non-combatants are included, this could have added a further 100 to 150 horses that required transportation.¹⁶⁶ Therefore, each ship within the fleet would, on average, have had to transport twenty-one horses.¹⁶⁷

The earl of Northampton's transport flotilla was the second of the three fleets to leave England in 1342. Given that Northampton led a force that was over three times larger than Mauny's, his transport armada was inevitably a much larger affair. As was noted above, this fleet suffers from source material that is difficult to interpret, and this makes any analysis of the ports that supplied the ships and the numbers of mariners who served on board difficult. For example, although the document compiled by John de Watenhul tells us that he requisitioned 117 vessels from the southern admiralty, we are not told which individual ports contributed which ships and how many. Nevertheless, it is possible to trace some of the ports involved in supplying ships for the earl of Northampton's transport fleet. For example, the pardons issued to several shipmasters do mention the vessels' home ports. There is also an order that was sent out to thirty-eight ports requesting that they provide the earl with ships for his forthcoming campaign.¹⁶⁸ As with Mauny's transport flotilla the majority of these ports were situated

¹⁶⁵ The number of ports that contributed these thirty-six vessels numbered 14. Of these ports 10 were situated south and west of the Thames, 3 were located north of the Thames and 1 was the port of Sluys in Flanders. The largest supplier of vessels was the port of Sandwich, which furnished six vessels manned by a complement of 215 (23%) seamen, followed by Winchelsea, which provided four ships manned by 172 (18.4%) mariners. However, this particular port also supplied the largest single ship of the Mauny transport fleet, the *Seintemariacog*, commanded by Richard Passelewe, which had a crew of 52 seamen.

¹⁶⁶ The evidence relating to the non-combatants is gained from the indenture of the earl of Arundel dated 1387 that stipulated how many servants the earl would take with him on campaign. The earl was allowed twelve for himself and each man-at-arms was allowed one; see A. R. Bell, *War and the soldier in the fourteenth century* (Woodbridge, 2004), p. 51. It has been presumed that their lord would provide the servants with horseflesh. Indeed, in 1415 John Mowbray brought with him on campaign tents, horses, armour, weapons, livery for his men, armourers, cooks, surgeons, priests and victuals, all of which cost him £1,000, more than he in fact received in wages, see G. Harriss, *Shaping the nation: England 1360–1461* (Oxford, 2005), p. 133.

¹⁶⁷ The majority of the ships in this fleet (18) began their service in March with twenty-four vessels staying on active service until 29 June, and two further ships serving until 1 July. Five of the vessels would seem to have left service early and therefore were not likely to have transported Mauny back to England. Mauny's fleet cost the crown £981 4s 8d, which was almost twice the amount paid out to his troops whose service cost the crown £609.

¹⁶⁸ *Foedera*, II, ii, p. 1201.

south and west of the Thames.¹⁶⁹ In total, fifty-one ports contributed 204 ships to the earl of Northampton's transport fleet but only 13 per cent of these ports were located within the sphere of the northern admiralty.

It is difficult to calculate the numbers of mariners who operated these vessels owing to the nature of the evidence. The Watenhul arrest document and the pipe roll entries give no indication of the numbers of mariners. However, the sixteen vessels recorded in the mariners payroll accounts contained in the Wardrobe book are provided with full crew sizes. Averaging out the crew numbers from these sixteen ships (twenty-one mariners per ship) and then extrapolating the results allows us to suggest a total of 5,000 for the whole fleet. Considering that the earl had 1,100 soldiers under his command, it can be seen that the maritime arm of his expedition required the mobilisation of perhaps four or five times more men.¹⁷⁰

The armada that transported the king was the last, and by far the largest, of the three fleets to embark for Brittany in 1342. The king sailed out of Portsmouth on 16 October and arrived at St Mathieu ten days later.¹⁷¹ In total, seventy-eight ports supplied vessels for the king's fleet. However, as with the transport flotillas of Mauny and the earl of Northampton the majority of the ports were situated in the southern admiralty's jurisdiction.¹⁷² These seventy-eight ports supplied the king with 487 ships. Of these, 378 vessels were recorded in the Wardrobe

¹⁶⁹ Of the seventeen that are recorded within the Chancery and *Ancient Correspondence* documents only seven are situated north of the Thames. The thirty-eight ports mentioned above contain no ports located north of the Thames.

¹⁷⁰ An army of this size would have taken approximately 2,200 horses with them, a figure that rises to 2,500 if we take into account the non-combatants. Considering the numbers of horses that would have required transportation each ship would have had to freight twelve horses. The cost in mariners' wages to the crown was far less than would otherwise be expected from a fleet of this magnitude owing to the free service of the 'pardon ships', and of those vessels' crews who had their pay forfeited. In all crown secured the services of these ships for just over £545.

¹⁷¹ Edward seems to have waited at the Isle of Wight until 25 October. He sailed into Brest harbour on 27 October: see E36/204, pp. 31–32.

¹⁷² Forty-five ports were located between the River Thames and Bristol, while thirty were in the area controlled by the northern admiral, three ports were foreign and the king's own ships were counted as a separate category. The three foreign ports were Sluys, Bayonne and a Catalanian port. The largest single provider of ships was Great Yarmouth, which contributed thirty-two (6.5%) vessels manned by 902 mariners. London supplied twenty-seven (5.5%) ships crewed by 545 seamen. The Cinque Ports contributed a total of fifty-two ships (10.6%) operated by 1,347 mariners. Apart from Great Yarmouth the ports located within the remit of the northern admiral which furnished the largest number of vessels were Hull, which provided eighteen (3.7%) manned by 371 mariners, followed by Gosforth, which contributed fourteen (2.8%) and 368 mariners. The largest single ship in the transport fleet was one of the king's own vessels, the *George*, which was operated by 166 mariners, including two masters. The next largest vessel was the *Edward* of Sluys, which was manned by 124 mariners. The largest ship supplied by an English port, other than the king's own ships, was the *Berthelmeu* of Great Yarmouth, commanded by Richard Bet, and crewed by 63 mariners. The smallest

pay accounts while a further 109 are listed within several other sources.¹⁷³ The number of seafarers is difficult to assess because 134 vessels have no crew sizes assigned to them. But we know that 8,796 masters and mariners served on board 348 ships, which gives us an average crew size of twenty-five. Applying this figure to the remaining vessels suggests that roughly 11,800 mariners manned the king's transport fleet.¹⁷⁴

The king's transport fleet of 487 vessels freighted an army that consisted of 3,800 men (4,350 including non-combatants), all of whom were mounted.¹⁷⁵ This force would have required the transportation of 5,000 horses, and on average each ship would therefore have had to freight ten horses to Brest in the autumn of 1342. None of the vessels, except the king's, served after 10 December 1342.¹⁷⁶ Of those ships for which we have accurate sailing dates, nearly two-thirds had completed their service in October, while a third ceased to be paid in November 1342, while all the king's ships served into 1343.

In conclusion, if all the ships that sailed in 1342 were added together the overall number of vessels would be 727. However, what these figures represent is 'ship-voyages', not individual ships – to account for repeat service.¹⁷⁷ Taking such cases into account, it can be suggested that in 1342 the number of actual ships involved in the transportation of English troops to Brittany numbered 610. This number concerns the vessels specifically involved in transportation duties, but the maritime contribution to the campaign went beyond this. For example, five masters were issued with letters from the Chancery allowing them to prey on French vessels that were supplying the forces of Charles de Blois in Brittany.¹⁷⁸ In addition, four further vessels were used to supply the king's forces with wine while he was in Brittany and John Montgomery, admiral of the western fleet,

vessels had no more than 10 mariners the *Blithe* of Dover, commanded by Peter Rede. See E36/204, pp. 221, 222, 226, 229, 234–36, 239, 240

¹⁷³ Eighty-eight deserter ships from CCR, 1341–43, pp. 128–32; five from C47/2/35; thirteen from the compensation account (E101/24/9 (b)), one vessel from the document compiled by Thomas Snetesham that records the payment made to the master Cok Gold (E101/22/38, no. 4), and two ships from CCHR, 5, p. 3.

¹⁷⁴ The overall known numbers of mariners that served in 1342 totalled 10,402. Of these the English contingent numbered 9,762 mariners of which the ports located between the Thames and Bristol contributed 6,393 (65%), while the northern ports supplied 3,369 (34%) masters and mariners. The rest were foreign.

¹⁷⁵ A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, pp. 14, 259.

¹⁷⁶ The last requisitioned merchant ship to leave service was the *Trinite* of London, commanded by William Clerbaud, which completed its service on 10 December 1342. See E36/204, p. 221.

¹⁷⁷ It is only possible to compare eighty-seven of the earl's transport ships to the other two fleets. However, the fact that only thirty-one were ordered to be arrested for failing to return must mean that the majority of the ships did so. None of the other vessels, the forty pardon ships and the sixteen visible in the Wardrobe accounts can be seen to have served in the king's fleet.

¹⁷⁸ CCR, 1341–43, p. 546.

was on board the *Edward* of Winchelsea, which he used as a ship of war with a crew including men-at-arms and archers.¹⁷⁹ We must not forget, moreover, the fifty-five ships that transported the Welsh foot to the Isles of Scilly.¹⁸⁰ Indeed, by taking this extra dimension into consideration, the maritime arm of the invasion numbered some 675 ships. The cost to the crown for the all three fleets came to £8,026 4s 8d.¹⁸¹

The analysis above has shown that the numbers of men required for the maritime dimension of the Brittany campaign far exceeded those employed ashore as soldiers. However, throughout this expedition Edward encountered problems, mostly caused by the ferry system the crown had implemented to transport the army. The result of this was that the king required many ships' crews to stay on active service for an extended period of time. As we have seen many chose not to. In Chapter 1 it was suggested that this expedition was a catalyst that forced Edward to adopt new methods when faced with the necessity of raising more than one fleet for transportation to the continent by introducing an element of privatisation in the fleet-raising procedure. Positively the problems faced by the English in 1342 show that the government was capable of adapting to rapidly changing events. The experiences and the knowledge gained through such problems allowed the administration to develop new techniques in ship requisition that would prove valuable during 1346 when the king wished to transport to France the largest English army raised in the fourteenth century.

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Although the transport fleet of 1346 is perhaps the most important armada of the period it is also, unfortunately, the most difficult to assess. This is because the original pay account relating to the 1346 expedition has been lost, and as such we have to consult several other sources that, nonetheless, still allow a detailed study of the size and composition of the Crécy transport fleet of 1346.¹⁸² The

¹⁷⁹ E101/23/18 records the wine ship, while E101/21/36, mm. 2–4 gives details of Montgomery's ship. The men on board Montgomery's vessel were only paid half wages, presumably because they had no horses with them.

¹⁸⁰ Kermond's account only includes two northern ports (Great Yarmouth and Ipswich) and of the three ships these two ports provided, two were seconded to the king, see E101/23/22, m. 3. The fifty-five southern vessels were manned by 1,176 mariners, while the one northern ship with a visible crew had 17 mariners onboard.

¹⁸¹ This includes the compensation money from E101/24/9 (a) and E101/24/9 (b). As we have seen, it is difficult to assess the numbers of mariners on board these ships, particularly those in the earl of Northampton's transport flotilla. Nevertheless, a rough total of 12,000 maritime personnel would seem reasonable, particularly if we assume that many seamen served more than once during the campaign, when they returned to transport the king after the earl of Northampton had disembarked at Brest.

¹⁸² The sources are three manuscripts: BL, Harleian MS 3968, fols 132r–133v; BL, Harleian MS 246, fols 15v–16v; BL, Add MS 38823, fols 65r–67v. The several published sources are: Robert Brady, *Complete history of England*, 2 vols (London, 1685, 1700), II, appendix, pp. 86–88;

most important sources for the 1346 transport fleet are three manuscript transcriptions dating to the early-modern period, which contain a list of ports and the numbers of ships they contributed to the fleet. Furthermore, there are also six surviving published works. Three of the published volumes also include port lists that are similar to the ones recorded in the three manuscripts, while the remaining three provide totals, without port lists, for the overall contribution of the maritime arm of the campaign.¹⁸³ By utilising one of the manuscript sources along with the reliable work of Robert Brady a detailed picture emerges of the 1346 transport armada.¹⁸⁴

The three surviving manuscripts appear to have been copied from the now lost *vadia marinariorum* section of Wetwang's final Wardrobe accounts that were submitted to the Exchequer after his term of office.¹⁸⁵ All three follow the same format of listing each port individually with a record of the numbers of ships and mariners that the port contributed. Further, they all group the ports according to the southern and northern admiralties, with the contributions made by several foreign ports attached to the end of the lists.¹⁸⁶ The end of each of the southern and northern admiralty sections, and the list of foreign ships, is concluded by an overall total. But a closer inspection and comparison reveals differences between these three manuscripts. For example, the port named as Milford in BL, Harleian MS 3968 is called Alyseford in BL, Add MS 38823. This suggests that these two documents may have been transcribed from an earlier copy (or copies), which is now lost. The complications continue when the numbers of ships and mariners assigned to particular ports are compared. For instance, in Harleian MS 3968 Faversham is recorded as having supplied two ships manned by twenty-five mariners. However, this same port in Add MS 38823 is listed as contributing two ships operated by fifty-three seamen. Further, the port of Woodhouse, according to Harleian MS 3968, furnished one vessel crewed by

A collection of ordinances and regulations for the government of the royal household (London, 1790), pp. 3–8; J. Bree, *The cursory sketch of the state of the naval, military and civil establishments during the fourteenth-century, with account of Edward III, in Normandy and France in the years 1345 and 1346, to the taking of Calais* (London, 1791), pp. 110–12; J. J. Champollion-Figeac, ed. *Lettres de rois, reines, et autres personages des cours de France et d' Angleterre*, 2 vols (Paris, 1847), II, pp. 86–92; R. Hakluyt, *The principal navigations, voyages, traffiques and discoveries of the English nation made by sea*, vol. 1 (Glasgow, 1903), pp. 297–299; *The brut*, ed. W. D. Brie, part II, p. 541.

¹⁸³ The three sources that have transcriptions of the port lists are: *A collection of ordinances*; R. Hakluyt, *Principal navigations*; Champollion-Figeac, *Lettres des rois*.

¹⁸⁴ R. Brady, II p. 86.

¹⁸⁵ For a stimulating and enlightening discussion of Wetwang's now lost accounts, see Ayton and Preston, *The battle of Crécy*, especially Chapter 2 appendix 1 by Dr Ayton, 'Reconstructing Walter Wetwang's lost *vadia guerre* accounts for the Crécy–Calais campaign'. Wetwang died in November 1347, so another clerk would have drawn up his accounts, see Ayton and Preston, *The battle of Crécy*, p. 230, n. 1.

¹⁸⁶ For example, on each manuscript the second entry is the port of London, which we are told contributed twenty-five ships manned by 662 mariners.

twenty-two mariners, while Add MS 38823 records this port as supplying one ship but only twelve seamen.¹⁸⁷

When the third manuscript is also compared against the other two further differences arise. The main problem that affects Harleian MS 246 is what seems to be a major transcription error in the northern port list.¹⁸⁸ The three manuscripts list the northern ports in the same order until the port of Dunwich. At this point Harleian MS 246 misses out the ports of Gosford and Harwich. In addition, the transcriber of Harleian MS 246 seems to have mistakenly recorded the total numbers of ships and mariners contributed by several ports. For example, the previous two manuscripts agree that Gosford contributed thirteen ships with 303 mariners, while the transcriber of Harleian MS 246 assigns these totals to the port of Orford.¹⁸⁹ Since that scribe seems also to have confused the total numbers of ships and mariners provided by the port of Orford, with those contributed by Ipswich, the usefulness of Harleian MS 246 should perhaps be questioned.¹⁹⁰ Consequently, by comparing the manuscripts with each other and the surviving published works it is possible to discard the two manuscripts that seem less reliable (BL, Harleian MS 246 and BL, Add MS 38823). Yet none of the three manuscripts contain the earliest details of the 1346 transport fleet as this is embedded in the *Brut* chronicle.¹⁹¹ Unfortunately, like Brady, the *Brut* provides no more than the number of ships and mariners involved in the expedition. It is worthy of note, however, that Brady and the *Brut* use the same words to describe the fleet, which suggests common consultation of Wetwang's book of accounts.¹⁹²

As we can see all three manuscripts have interpretational issues associated with them. This being said it has been noted previously that BL, Harleian MS 3968 provides information that the other manuscripts do not, and for this reason

¹⁸⁷ BL, Harleian MS 3968, fols 132r, 133r; BL, Add MS 38823, fols 65r, 66v. It is also worth noting that the compiler of Harleian MS 3968 originally recorded a total of 298 mariners for Faversham but crossed that total out and then wrote the new total of 25 alongside it.

¹⁸⁸ Although this could have arisen because the compiler of BL, Harleian MS 246 used a different copy of Wetwang's accounts than the previous two transcribers. The northern ports in BL, Harleian MS 246 are recorded on fol. 16v.

¹⁸⁹ Gosford is recorded on BL, Harleian MS 3968, fol. 133r and BL, Add MS 38823, fol. 67r. It has been asserted before that Gosford did not actually exist and that what in fact the scribes were recording was simply an invention for a well-known collection point of ships at the estuary of the River Crouch, see R. G. Marsden, 'The mythical town of Orwell', *EHR* 21 (1906), pp. 93–98, p. 96.

¹⁹⁰ Ipswich contributed 12 ships manned by 239 mariners according to BL, Harleian MS 3968 and BL, Add MS 38823 while BL, Harleian MS 246 gives the number of 3 ships operated by 62 mariners. On BL, Harleian MS 246 Ipswich is recorded on fol. 16v.

¹⁹¹ *Brut*, p. 541; Ayton, and Preston, *The battle of Crécy*, p. 233.

¹⁹² Both Brady and the *Brut* use the words, 'barges, balyngers and vitteliers', to describe the types of ships used in the fleet. The original copy of Wetwang's foreign accounts must have contained this phraseology as in no other source consulted by this book do those descriptive words appear. *Brut*, p. 541; R. Brady, II, p. 86.

it is suggested as the source most likely to offer the most accurate details of what the Wardrobe accounts would have recorded.¹⁹³ Consequently by following the above procedure and by relying on the figures given by Brady as a guide, and by consulting BL, Harleian MS 3968 to understand the individual contributions of the northern and southern ports it is possible to reconstruct the 1346 transport fleet. Brady is considered the most reliable because we know that he directly consulted Wetwang's Wardrobe accounts because he states that the information contained in his book was gained 'from a roll in my possession'.¹⁹⁴ Yet what also seems evident is that Brady did not include the foreign ships and rounded up his numbers for the fleet. He states that the armada numbered some 700 barges, ballingers and ships, which were manned by 16,000 mariners.¹⁹⁵

The conclusion reached here is that by consulting Brady in conjunction BL, Harleian MS 3968 it is possible to understand the individual shipping contributions made by the northern and southern ports to the transport fleet of 1346. In total eighty-nine ports supplied ships for the transport fleet.¹⁹⁶ These eighty-nine ports contributed 747 ships manned by 15,917 mariners.¹⁹⁷ The ports from the southern admiralty supplied 493 (66%) ships while the northern ports furnished 216 (28.9%) vessels with the foreign contingent amounting to thirty-eight (5%) ships.¹⁹⁸ Unfortunately, the port list provided in this manuscript does not record the names of the vessels, or their masters, and so it is possible to name only a few of the king's ships along with their masters.¹⁹⁹ It could be argued, of course, that embedded within the early modern manuscript's overall totals are numerous

¹⁹³ See the section in A. Ayton and P. Preston, *The battle of Crécy* by Dr Ayton, 'Reconstructing Walter Wetwang's lost *vadia guerre* accounts for the Crécy–Calais campaign,' which highlights the potential of BL, Harleian MS 3968.

¹⁹⁴ R. Brady, II p. 86.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.* That Brady did round up the fleet numbers is entirely plausible. For example, Brady presents the army's service as one continuous period from 4 June 1346 to 12 October 1347. Yet it is more likely that in Wetwang's accounts each retinue or contingent had several dates of service attached to it.

¹⁹⁶ Of these, the majority, fifty-one (57.3%), were located in the southern admiralty while thirty-three (37%) were situated north of the Thames and the remaining five (5.6%) were foreign ports.

¹⁹⁷ The actual number recorded by the manuscript is 746 ships. However, it is known that the Prince of Wales' ship, the *Thomas*, also participated in the fleet. See BPR, III, p. 413.

¹⁹⁸ The ships of the southern admiralty were operated by 9,597 (60%) seamen, while the northern vessels required 5,515 (34.6%) mariners to staff their contingent of ships, and 805 (5%) mariners. The largest single supplier of ships to the fleet was the port of Great Yarmouth, which contributed forty-three (5.7%) vessels operated by 1,950 (12.2%) maritime personnel. The port from the southern fleet, which provided the most ships, was London whose contingent numbered twenty-five (3.3%) vessels manned by 662 (4.1%) mariners. The king himself supplied a sizeable proportion of the fleet and his own ships amounted to twenty-five (3.3%) vessels operated by 419 (2.6%) seamen.

¹⁹⁹ For example, CCR, 1346–49, p. 95, shows that the *George*, commanded by Robert Salmon, participated in the transport fleet of 1346. He was sent back from Caen to Winchelsea in 1346.

vessels that did not sail in 1346, but in fact operated during the siege of Calais in 1347, as the manuscripts themselves suggest. That there may be ships recorded by the early modern copyists that operated during the siege is likely. Nevertheless, for two reasons the numbers of vessels that have been included in the transport fleet instead of the siege flotillas should be relatively small. First, in 1347 the admirals did not account through the Wardrobe but through the Exchequer in England for the fleets they raised to operate during the siege. Second, because of the method employed by the admirals in paying the mariners the only flotilla that was likely to have been included in the final Wardrobe accounts is the ferry fleet that operated from June to September 1347. Can we therefore be more accurate as to the size of this ferry fleet? It is unlikely that this flotilla was large and by using the book of foreign receipts recorded by Walter Wetwang we can estimate its size.²⁰⁰ Throughout June to September Wetwang's assistant William Huggate issued nine advances to mariners totaling £626 8s 3d. The first installment that was issued in June totaled £140. If we were to say that each ship had a crew of twenty mariners (an average crew size that is consistent with the majority of the fleets in this book) and that an advance to the crews on board each vessel for their first quarter of wages would come to about £8 (that is the first month's payment out of three months served), then it possible that we are looking at a fleet that numbered some twenty-five ships. Taking this into account the size of the 1346 transport fleet should be viewed as somewhere in the region of 720 ships, manned by an estimated 15,000 mariners.

In 1346, therefore, we have an English transport fleet numbering between 720 and 747 ships that freighted Edward's army to la Hougue on 12 July. The size of the force that these vessels were required to transport was indeed impressive, and in terms of men deployed it was the largest army ever taken to France by Edward III. It is estimated that the retinues that made up the three divisions of the army numbered some 2,500–3,000 men-at-arms and 2,500–3,000 archers, the latter being mostly mounted. The arrayed troops, provided by the towns and shires of England and the Welsh lordships, added a further 8,000 men, most of whom, around 5,000, would have been archers. With the inclusion of the non-combatant element that accompanied every medieval army the number of men requiring transportation to Normandy in 1346 would have been in the region of 15,000–20,000.²⁰¹ The number of horses requiring transportation would have been in the region of 15,000 (especially if we include those for the baggage train). This would mean that each ship, on average, would have had to freight twenty men and twenty horses to La Hougue; but given that some of the ships of the fleet would have had limited carrying capacity, the normal burden may well have been rather more than this.

²⁰⁰ E101/390/12, fols 17r–21r.

²⁰¹ The most detailed assessment of the English army in 1346 is given in Ayton and Preston, *The battle of Crécy*, especially the Chapter by Dr Ayton, 'The English army at Crécy', pp. 168, 171, 174, 181–89.

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After Edward's army arrived and disembarked at La Hougue, the ships that had transported his force were no longer required, although Edward did retain a fleet of vessels to harry, burn and destroy French shipping and ports along the coast. This policy was implemented to prevent any chance of French naval aggression during Edward's campaign, but it also allowed the English sailors to settle some old scores. This fleet certainly did its work thoroughly, 'burning and destroying all the seacoast from Barfleur to the foss of Colevill near Caen'; and, according to Edward himself, it sank over 100 French ships in the process.²⁰² But on 26 July as Edward's army moved deeper inland the fleet was no longer required, and after the earl of Huntingdon fell ill it was disbanded and sent home.

Yet the maritime communities were soon called upon again, when in September 1346 Edward besieged the French town of Calais. Evidence concerning maritime participation throughout this siege is contained in three surviving financial accounts.²⁰³ Two of these provide details of the contributions made by the ports north of the Thames and by those towns located within the southern admiralty, all of which seem to have been used solely for prosecuting the blockade of Calais. The third document provides evidence of what seems to be a separate ferry fleet, which operated throughout June to September 1347.²⁰⁴ Apart from the reinforcements that arrived with John Montgomery in September 1346 the maritime involvement, and thus the transportation of troops and the blockading of Calais, did not begin until April 1347.²⁰⁵ The first fleet arrived in April 1347 and was under the command of the admiral of the north, John Howard. Howard had earlier been ordered to find and deploy eighty ships of war; each crewed by sixty mariners and with twenty archers on board. To pay for such a fleet Howard was authorised to use the subsidy that Edward had been granted by parliament.²⁰⁶ The ships under Howard did not arrive as one fleet; rather they appeared in small numbers over the course of three months. Nevertheless, by June, a month when the service of all the ships in Howard's fleet overlapped, the admiral had managed to assemble on the seas around Calais a fleet of forty-six ships manned

²⁰² Nicolas, *History of the royal navy*, II, p. 92; Avesbury, p. 359; R. Barber, ed. *The life and campaigns of the Black Prince*, p. 18, which records a letter written by Bartholomew Burgherssh to the archbishop of Canterbury on 29 July and details some actions of the fleet around Caen.

²⁰³ A more detailed account of the siege can be found in C. L. Lambert, 'The siege of Calais by Edward III: a reappraisal', *Journal of Medieval History* (forthcoming, 2011). This article is to be included in a special edition of *Journal of Medieval History*.

²⁰⁴ E101/21/36; E101/25/24; E101/390/12, fols 17r–21r.

²⁰⁵ This suggestion is reinforced by examination of Walter Wetwang's receipt book (E101/390/12, fols 10v–12v), which shows that no ships' crews were being paid in the winter of 1346–47.

²⁰⁶ E101/25/23. This contains hundreds of indentures between Howard, the collectors of the subsidies and individual ports. This account is directly linked to E101/25/24.

by 2,996 masters, constables and mariners.²⁰⁷ The majority of these vessels (26) served until 15 September.²⁰⁸ A total of fifteen ports supplied these ships all of which, except Bruges, were situated on the east coast.²⁰⁹ The crew sizes aboard these ships were large: only two vessels had fewer than forty mariners, and the rest had crews of at least seventy-three.²¹⁰ The crew sizes alone suggest that this fleet was involved in the military arm of the siege, rather than transportation duties. This interpretation is reinforced by the evidence relating to the tunnage of the ships in Howard's fleet, which shows that some of the vessels were only forty tuns burthen, and would therefore not have required crew sizes of this magnitude.²¹¹ In addition to the fleet under Howard's command, by 5 March 1347 four of the king's own ships were plying the waters around Calais.²¹²

Some days after the first ships in Howard's fleet arrived outside Calais another flotilla of warships under the command of John Montgomery augmented it. Montgomery had actually sailed to Calais earlier in the operation when in September 1346 he commanded the fleet that carried the reinforcements under William Fraunk. Unfortunately the details of this fleet are now missing; presumably they were recorded in the lost accounts of Walter Wetwang. Fortunately, however, we have the pay details of the fleet he commanded during the second phase of the siege of Calais throughout April, May and June 1347.²¹³ This account, however, which was sent to the Exchequer for audit, poses some interpretational difficulties. On 14 October 1347 Montgomery had died and therefore the executor of his will, Andrew Peverel, compiled the account, which was obviously left in

²⁰⁷ E101/25/24, nos 1–46.

²⁰⁸ Eleven served up to 1 August and eight only served from April to June, while the *James* of Bruges has no dates of service attached to it.

²⁰⁹ Great Yarmouth contributed the most vessels to the fleet supplying fifteen (32.6%) vessels manned by 1,156 (38.5%) seamen. In addition to the crew sizes we are also told the tonnages of these ships. The largest ships were the *Edmond*, commanded by William Ronyng, of Great Yarmouth and the *Berthelmeu*, commanded by Richard Tynwhit (numbers 23 and 25), both of which were 180 tuns, with the overall mean average size of the ships coming to 89 tuns.

²¹⁰ The *Floyne*, commanded by William de Balyng of Great Yarmouth, which was crewed by 33 mariners and 1 constable and the *Flouve*, commanded by John Mose of Harwich, which was operated by 32 mariners and 1 constable were the ships with crew sizes smaller than forty, these are recorded on numbers 5 and 15.

²¹¹ For example, in 1324 the *Marie* of Great Yarmouth commanded by Thomas Swathe, which freighted troops to Gascony was 300 tuns and had a crew of seventy mariners, including a constable, see BL, Add MS 7967, fol. 98r. Further, in the 1338 Low Countries transport fleet the *Cristiane* of Weymouth commanded by Walter atte Loue was a ship measured at 90 tuns burthen and was operated by a total crew of twenty-seven, including a constable and a boy; see E101/21/7, m. 3. As such ships serving in 1347 at measured 40 tuns had crew sizes comparable with vessels at 300 tuns.

²¹² E101/390/12, fol. 12v. These five ships of the king's were later recorded amongst the sixty-one vessels under Montgomery, who seems to have taken control of the royal vessels during the siege.

²¹³ E101/21/36.

some disarray.²¹⁴ There are 122 entries on the account, which on closer inspection can be reduced to sixty-one individual ships due to the repetition of some of the ships and their masters. What these payments record is the advance on the crews' wages. For example, thirty-eight mariners and one constable, manned the *Rodecog*, commanded by Henry Whasselede, and this crew was paid £4 towards their wages for seventeen days service.²¹⁵

That these sixty-one ships served during the siege can be deduced from the source. It is true that Peverel states that some of the ships were employed on the king's business, possibly diplomatic service, and that the account runs from 1340 to 1346. But these potential complications can be discounted for the reason that diplomatic fleets of the Edwardian era usually consisted of between two to four vessels.²¹⁶ Therefore, we may conclude that the sixty-one ships contained in this account, which served at the same time, cannot have been employed in diplomatic activities. Moreover, although Montgomery was admiral of the southern fleet in 1342, it is unlikely that these ships participated in that campaign because the wages paid to the crews of the ships in 1342 were processed through the Wardrobe accounts of William Edington. Only the particulars of John Kermond were audited separately from Edington's accounts, and that was due to the nature of his appointment as the clerk in charge of sending the reinforcements to Brittany while the Wardrobe was with the king.²¹⁷ In addition, because the ships began service in April the dates of service and the crew sizes in Peverel's account point to the siege of Calais and a military operation.

All except three of the sixty-one ships under Montgomery's command were supplied by ports south and west of the Thames.²¹⁸ Thirty-three of the ports were located in the southwest and 3,533 mariners manned the ships. Their periods of service ranged between seventeen and twenty-five days through April and May 1347, although the king's eight ships, which Montgomery took command of, participated in the siege served through June. This marked a clear increase in the maritime resources during the siege and matched the increase in troops that were arriving in May owing to the threat of the French forces that were gathering under Philip VI.

The third source that relates to the maritime involvement in the siege of Calais is the record of payments issued to mariners as preserved by Wetwang in his book of foreign receipts. During the summer of 1347 William Huggate (described as 'clerk of the ships') made a series of nine advances on wages to ships' crews. The inclusion of these payments in Wetwang's accounts suggests that Huggate was obviously operating under the umbrella of the keeper of the

²¹⁴ *Complete peerage*, vol. 9, pp. 136–37.

²¹⁵ E101/21/36, m. 4.

²¹⁶ An exception was the Bishop of Lincoln's diplomatic flotilla in 1337, which was unusual because of its importance.

²¹⁷ Kermond's account is recorded on E101/23/22.

²¹⁸ The northern port that contributed ships was Great Yarmouth.

Wardrobe. There are only two possible reasons why Huggate would issue such large sums of money on nine separate occasions. First, what we could be seeing are nine separately raised fleets of transport ships that were disbanded after they had made just one crossing to Calais. This would mean, of course, that Edward's army was only reinforced, and those troops who had fallen ill taken back to England, nine times throughout the siege. The second, and more likely, explanation is that these nine payments were issued to the same flotilla of vessels, which were used repeatedly over a four-month period. It is argued here that what in fact Huggate issued money for was a ferry system, constituted in June 1347 and stationed at Sandwich, for the sole use of the transportation of reinforcements to the siege.²¹⁹ That this fleet was a sizeable entity can be seen by examining the total amounts issued by Huggate from June to September, which totaled £614 1s 4d. The likelihood is that these payments were only advances on wages and so the fleet must have contained twenty-five to fifty vessels.²²⁰ The evidence, therefore, seems to suggest that from April to September Edward had procured the services of at least 107 ships for the prosecution of the siege of Calais manned by 6,527 seamen.²²¹ In order to create a fleet of this size Edward relied on the contributions from thirty-five ports with a little over half (18) of these located in the southern admiralty.²²²

It is now possible to propose some overall conclusions about the role of shipping during the campaigns of 1346 and 1347. In all ninety-two ports contributed ships for the king's campaigns in the fourteen months that the expeditions

²¹⁹ Indeed, the implementation of a ferry system was not a new development. Henry II also operated such a system during his reign as a means of keeping in regular contact with his domains in France; see N. A. M. Rodger, 'The naval service of the Cinque Ports', pp. 641–42.

²²⁰ Huggate issued his first payment of £140 on 27 June. He then paid another £58 16d in the first week of July, followed by three more payments in this month on the 9, 10 and 28 July. He made three similar payments throughout August before making his final payment in September. The first payment that Huggate issued was for £140. If we were to say that each ship had a crew of twenty and the advance on their wages was for their first quarter (i.e. one month at roughly £6–£8) then the fleet probably numbered twenty-five ships.

²²¹ This number of ships should not be taken to be the overall maritime contribution to the siege. There were many vessels involved in the supply operation. For example, in early 1347 the sheriff of Essex sent seven ships from Colchester loaded with supplies to Edward's forces. These ships mainly freighted malt and oats and the wages of the mariners and the costs of the supplies came to £93 6s 8d, see E101/556/37. However, the supply operation during the siege is beyond the scope of the above analysis.

²²² The northern ports supplied forty-five (43%) individual vessels manned by 2,996 (48%) mariners, while the ports located in the southern admiralty provided fifty-eight ships (55%) operated by 3,431 (55%) seamen. One ship was provided by Bruges (the *James*) and three vessels were from Bayonne (the *Katherine*, commanded by John Markyn; the *Gercer*, commanded by Arnold de la Ralde and the *Katherine*, commanded by Arnold Tulhous). The foreign vessels were manned by 102 mariners.

ran for.²²³ These ports provided a maritime contribution numbering 853 ships, manned by 23,907 masters, constables and mariners.²²⁴ The southern ports contributed about two-thirds of the ships to the 1346 and 1347 naval operation, but only half of the mariners, indicating that on average the ships from the northern admiralty were larger. These figures speak for themselves in many respects. That the naval operations of 1346 and 1347 were of a great magnitude is borne out by the fleet sizes and numbers of mariners shipped. This investment of resource helped to bring victory at Crécy and, perhaps more importantly, English control of a port on French soil. Did control of Calais, change the way transport fleets were raised and deployed? The problem in answering this question relates to the lack of source material for the 1355 expedition, and therefore the only available major campaign that sailed to Calais, which can be analysed in detail, is the last personal expedition to France by Edward III in 1359.

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The campaign of 1359–60 was to be Edward's last great mobilisation of men, under his personal command, to fight on French soil. The force that Edward led out of Calais in early November was the 'best equipped army Edward had ever assembled'.²²⁵ The men under Edward's command totalled 3,000 men-at-arms and 5,000 mounted archers.²²⁶ This, of course, meant that the number of ships required for the transportation of such a large, fully mounted force, should have been of the same order of magnitude as that assembled for the Crécy campaign of 1346.²²⁷ As such, the number of horses that required shipment must have been large. We know, for example, that 10,861 horses, which were shipped back from France, were recorded through Farley's accounts.²²⁸ Yet, throughout the summer

²²³ Of these, fifty-three (57.6%) ports were located south and west of the Thames while thirty-three (35.8%) were east coast ports and six (6.5%) were foreign.

²²⁴ Owing to the nature of the evidence relating to the Crécy fleet, namely, that the manuscripts do not provide the masters' names or the names of the ships it is difficult to correlate the 1346 fleet with those serving through the siege. However the king's eight ships serving in 1347 would surely have been among the 25 ships, which served in the transport fleet of 1346 so the number of individual ships should perhaps be 835. The ports south and west of the Thames provided 547 (64%) of these vessels while the east coast ports furnished 265 (31%) ships and the foreign element numbered 38 (5%) ships. The king's ships have been added to the southern admiralty. The ports north of the Thames supplied 10,286 (46%) of these maritime personnel and those vessels south and west of the Thames required 11,081 (50%) mariners to operate them while the foreign contingent of seamen numbered 907 (4%). The ship of Bruges has no crew size attached to it so the foreign contingent should perhaps be raised to 850 mariners.

²²⁵ C. J. Rogers, *War cruel and sharp*, p. 396.

²²⁶ A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, p. 268.

²²⁷ Indeed, the *Chronicon anonymi Cantuariensis*, p. 50 says the fleet numbered a thousand ships in addition to numerous small boats. This comment is in line with the chronicle assessments of the size of the 1346 transport fleet.

²²⁸ A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, p. 268.

and autumn of 1359 the actual number of transported horses must have been close to 30,000, if we include those in the large baggage train that supported the army.²²⁹ But the preparations for the campaign, particularly the requisitioning of sufficient ships, were troublesome for the king.²³⁰ This resulted in the army being transported in six separate crossings. The first to take passage in August were several contingents of the royal household. After this fleet a second smaller flotilla of twenty-one ships freighted a second part of the army, followed in September by the duke of Lancaster. In October the earl of March sailed to Calais a few days ahead the king.²³¹ The final fleet was made up of the retinue captains who had received payments from the crown to hire their own ships.²³² This section analyses the number of ships raised and assess the reasons for the dearth of shipping that afflicted this particular campaign.

Although the organisation of the fleets was similar to the Brittany expedition of 1342 it is clear from the way the fleets sailed in 1359 that this expedition was organised in a different way from previous campaigns in that some retinue captains organised their own shipping. By examining four payrolls that record the wages paid to mariners we can piece together these fleets. One series of accounts runs from 27 June to 6 August 1359, while one further particular, compiled by Robert de Crull, records the wages paid to eight vessels, which participated in all three separate voyages and which served from 20 August to 4 November 1359.²³³ Close scrutiny of the payrolls relating to this campaign show quite clearly that there were in fact six separate fleets that sailed between August and October. Although many of the ships involved were undoubtedly used more than once, they nevertheless comprised six individual fleets. For example, the first four payrolls record a total of 438 ships that must have transported members of the royal household, among other men-at-arms, who began their paid service in August.²³⁴ Considering the number of ships involved in this first fleet the

²²⁹ On the baggage train and its possible size, see Jean le Bel, ii, pp. 312–13. Thomas Walsingham stated that the baggage train numbered ‘a thousand wagons and carts’, see R. Hakluyt, *Principal navigations*, p. 301, in which Hakluyt records a passage from Walsingham.

²³⁰ *Scalacronica*, p. 171.

²³¹ Fifteen members of the royal household began receiving pay in August 1359. Sir William Grandson was the first to begin receiving pay on 3 August 1359, although he was not a member of the household. The first of the household to be paid wages was Simon Bisset on 16 August 1359, see E101/393/11, fols 81r, 82v, 83v, 84r, 85, 85v.

²³² A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, p. 270.

²³³ E101/27/22; E101/27/23; E101/27/24; E101/27/25; E101/27/31. Furthermore, E101/27/16 records some purchases of equipment for three of the king’s ships that formed this August fleet. They were the *George*, commanded by John Gybon, which sailed on 12 August, the *Godbye*, commanded by John Ruck, which sailed on 12 August and the *Welfare*, commanded by Bartholomew Stygen, which sailed on 28 August.

²³⁴ Although the ships were in port by June it is unlikely that they sailed before August. Indeed, much like the land-based retinues it is likely that the mariners started to receive pay when they arrived at the port, not when they began transporting the army. See A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, p. 146.

household contingents must have been placed in charge of a sizeable force. Alternatively, this first fleet could have been used to freight the horses and supplies for the army, with certain members of the royal household sent across with such supplies.

The second fleet is embedded within these four pay accounts and consisted of twenty-one vessels out of the original fleet, which served again sometime after August.²³⁵ On the first payroll (E101/27/22) they were in service for thirteen, fourteen or twenty days, while on the second particular (E101/27/25) all the ships received pay for either eight or six days. That we are seeing two different fleets is beyond doubt because the majority of these ships are recorded with different crew sizes on the two payrolls. For example, Simon Robyn from Cromer, master of the *Eleyne*, served on board this ship with a crew of five mariners in the first crossing to Calais, while on his second voyage there were six.²³⁶ What seems to have occurred is that after the first fleet sailed in the summer, twenty-one vessels returned to England and transported another small contingent of men sometime after August. These twenty-one ships formed part of a small flotilla of vessels that served alongside eight of the king's ships (about which, more below) during late August and early October.

In all 438 ships are recorded as having received payment for transporting the first contingent, with a further eight vessels hired from the Low Countries ports.²³⁷ The exact numbers of mariners who manned these vessels is difficult to assess with any accuracy owing to the condition of some of the payrolls. For example, on one of the accounts that records the wages issued to mariners serving on east coast vessels, seventy-one ships' crews cannot be ascertained.²³⁸ But we can decipher the tonnages of thirty of these vessels. Averaging the tonnages of these thirty ships allows us to suggest a mean tonnage for forty-four others. Using the same account, and the tonnages of the ships where we can see the crew sizes, it can be speculated that these seventy-one ships were crewed by up to fourteen mariners each. A further account suffers from the same problems, but by applying the same method it is possible to average out the tonnages and therefore place an estimated number of mariners on the six ships' crews that are irretrievable from the account.²³⁹ In total, 6,149 mariners operated these ships

²³⁵ These are found by comparing E101/27/22, mm. 3, 4 with E101/27/25, m. 2. The ships are all from ten ports located on the east coast.

²³⁶ E101/27/22, m. 3; E101/27/25, m. 2.

²³⁷ 368 (83.7%) ships were contributed by ports north of the Thames and 70 (14.5%) from ports located south and west of the Thames.

²³⁸ E101/27/22.

²³⁹ E101/27/24.

(this does not include the eight Low Countries ships).²⁴⁰ Eighty-seven ports provided the ships of which seventy-two were located north of the Thames.²⁴¹

Therefore, the above Exchequer accounts show that during July and August 446 ships operated by 6,149 mariners, contributed by eighty-seven ports, formed the first two transport fleets of the Reims campaign. Given the number of ships involved in this first armada, and by comparing it to the transport fleets of the Low Countries and Brittany campaigns, it is probable that 3,000–4,000 men could have been transported in the first contingent.²⁴² The third fleet to sail did so in September and was a small flotilla that transported the duke of Lancaster. Lancaster was sent ahead of the king because of the problems at Calais stemming from the foreign mercenaries that had appeared in large numbers during the summer months. By the time it came to September they were becoming restless and the king needed to send a figure of high repute to gain some order.²⁴³ Lancaster's small fleet is enrolled on a particular compiled by Robert de Crull.²⁴⁴ This records eight royal ships with dates of service indicating four separate crossings, ranging throughout the summer and autumn of 1359.²⁴⁵ For example, the *Godebiet*, commanded by John Ruck, and crewed by one constable and thirty-one mariners, sailed from London to Calais on 23 August. After this the vessel's service was extended, with the addition of a further nine mariners from 24 August to 30 September. On 1 October with the subtraction of one mariner, but the addition of one page, the same ship served until 14 October. Finally, from 15 October to 4 November the vessel sailed with a crew of one constable,

²⁴⁰ Of these, 4,788 (77.8%) manned the ships from the ports north of the Thames, while 1,064 (17.3%) operated those ships contributed from the ports south and west of the Thames. The remaining, 297 mariners operated the king's ships.

²⁴¹ The port that supplied the most ships was Great Yarmouth, which contributed forty-nine (10.2%) vessels operated by 658 (10.7%) mariners. This was followed by Hull with twenty (4.1%) ships crewed by 372 (6%) seaman. The largest provider of shipping from the ports south and west of the Thames was Dartmouth, which contributed nine (1.8%) vessels. Unfortunately, the numbers of mariners from Dartmouth are difficult to calculate owing to the condition of the document. However, an average tunnage of 103 tuns per ship can be gained from the payroll, which permits us to estimate that mariners that served on board these nine ships would be 300.

²⁴² Of course we do not know the exact tonnages for the Brittany fleet. However, the majority of the Reims vessels seem to have been of a small size. Nevertheless, because the Reims army was a fully mounted force the number of men shipped to Calais could be a little smaller than those transported in the earlier campaigns, which contained large numbers of foot soldiers.

²⁴³ Lancaster must have sailed for Calais at some point in September because he was in the town just after 29 September 1359, see C. J. Rogers, *War cruel and sharp*, p. 401, n. 84.

²⁴⁴ E101/27/31.

²⁴⁵ *Chronicon anonymi Cantuariensis*, p. 52, says that March's retinue consisted of 350 men-at-arms and 600 archers. Therefore, if eight ships performed four crossings it would be the equivalent of twenty-four vessels, which seems an adequate number of ships to transport March's retinue.

forty mariners and one page. Although it has been pointed out previously that Lancaster was transported along with 300 men-at-arms and 2,000 archers the payrolls relating to the shipping evidence do not seem to corroborate this statement.²⁴⁶ It is doubtful that such a large force set sail with Lancaster, unless they did so in the hired ships. In fact it is more likely that Lancaster took command of the forces that were already stationed in Calais. Or alternatively a large section of his men, along with members from the royal household, had sailed in the first fleet in August, or in the twenty-one vessels that sailed subsequently.

The fourth fleet to sail was that of the earl of March in October. It is beyond doubt that March was shipped in the same eight royal vessels that Lancaster had used a month earlier. Indeed, we know that March, according to Thomas Gray, embarked for Calais six days before the king and then made a *chevauchée* in the surrounding area.²⁴⁷ Given that the king sailed to Calais on 28 October the earl of March must have crossed on the 22nd of the same month.²⁴⁸ The disembarkation of March seems to fit in exactly with the dates of service of these eight ships.²⁴⁹ Throughout their periods of service it is likely these royal vessels made several crossings to and from Calais during the course of which they transported March. We know, for example, that a section of the retinue captains were required to hire their own transport vessels and that they were compensated for this by the crown. However, the earl of March received no such payment from the crown for his outward voyage.²⁵⁰ This suggests that March along with his retinue embarked on the ships requisitioned and paid for by the crown. The fifth contingent to sail utilised the same eight ships as March and this was the flotilla that freighted the king and his household. We know that the king crossed the Channel aboard the *Philip* and this is likely to have been the same *Philip*, commanded by Bartholomew Stygan, and manned by fifty-six mariners, which is enrolled by Crull and completed its period of service on 30 October.²⁵¹ The sixth and final fleet to sail consisted of those captains who had to pay for their own passage and who were later reimbursed by the crown for doing so. It is likely that this fleet sailed sometime in October close to or before the king's small fleet. In fact what seems to have occurred throughout 1359 is that rather than retinues being transported as whole units in the same fleet, soldiers from the same retinues were actually embarked piecemeal on different ships. The

²⁴⁶ See, for example, C. J. Rogers, *War cruel and sharp*, p. 401. Roger's account is largely based on chronicle evidence with regard to the transport of Lancaster's forces.

²⁴⁷ *Scalacronica*, p. 171.

²⁴⁸ CCR, 1354–60, p. 656.

²⁴⁹ March began his paid service on 5 September, see E101/393/11, fol. 79v.

²⁵⁰ A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, table A, p. 265. Although March died while on campaign, and thus would not have required re-passage payments, he should still have received payment for his outward passage if he had hired his own ships.

²⁵¹ CCR, 1354–60, p. 656; E101/27/31. Stygan had previously served as master of the *Welfare* in the August fleet.

result of this was that the earl of Lancaster may have arrived in Calais both after and before some of his retinue.

The above analysis has shown that from July to mid-October 446 ships transported the first five contingents of the army to Calais (household members; Lancaster; March and the king). Comparisons with other transport fleets of the period would suggest that an estimated 2,000–3,000 men were freighted on these vessels. This, of course, would have left some 6,000 men in England still awaiting transportation to Calais. How was this passage achieved? It has already been noted that some of the captains serving in this campaign had to hire their own shipping. However, of the 400 or so companies known to have served on this expedition only twenty-five received passage payments from the crown.²⁵² These twenty-five retinues consisted of 1,800 men-at-arms and 2,150 mounted archers.²⁵³ Moreover, in those cases where passage payments were made, a comparison of the numbers of horses retinue captains shipped from England to Calais with those they brought back usually shows that the July–August fleet transported some of the horses as well. For example, Farley's payroll tells us that the Black Prince transported 1,369 horses to Calais but he brought back 2,114.²⁵⁴ This seems to suggest that 745 of the horses were actually transported ahead of the Prince's arrival in the July–August armada. It would seem, therefore, that the 446 ships involved in the July–August fleet not only transported many of the land-based contingents but also freighted large numbers of horses from those retinue captains who had to arrange shipping themselves. One can see why this was the case for it would make the work of the retinue captain, in hiring his own ships, much easier if the part of his 'kit' that required the most room aboard ship had already been freighted over to Calais.

In summary, then, the payroll evidence relating to the Reims campaign seems to suggest that the land-based contingents were transported over to Calais in six separate stages. As noted above, only twenty-five captains who sailed in the final armada had to find their own ships, but these did include very large retinues consisting of nearly 4,000 men. To what extent did these retinue captains hire the same ships that freighted the first two portions of the army? This question poses some problems not least of which is why did Edward simply not order the ships to return to Sandwich after they had transported the July–August section of the army and then extend their paid service? We know, for example, that this is what happened in 1356 when Lancaster's army was carried in two separate journeys by the same ships.²⁵⁵ There are two likely explanations for the king not taking what appears to be the easiest option. First, Edward would have recalled

²⁵² A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, Table B, pp. 268–69.

²⁵³ E101/393/11, fols 83r–86v.

²⁵⁴ A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, p. 270.

²⁵⁵ *Avesbury*, p. 462. Lancaster's force, however, in 1356 was likely to have been quite small when compared to the army of 1359, thus allowing a smaller number of ships to be used in this way.

the fiasco that had occurred during the Brittany campaign of 1342, when the disobedience of certain shipmasters caused problems throughout the expedition. Second, as we have already seen in Chapter 1, after the Brittany expedition of 1342 the crown had included an element of privatisation in the fleet-raising procedure in order to compensate for the problems that long periods of naval service could bring. Nevertheless, in 1359 if we assume that there were 4,000 troops requiring transportation after the first two fleets had sailed a further 400–500 vessels would be required. The evidence suggests that, in order to secure the 800 or so ships that would be required to transport the whole army to Calais, the crown decided on six fleets. The crown provided five of these fleets in the traditional manner, while the twenty-five captains who had to organise their own transportation privately hired ships to form the sixth armada.

In conclusion, my analysis has shown that during the period 1325 to 1338 there was a notable increase in the size of English transport fleets to the continent. Thereafter, Table 3.2 shows that the 1340s saw the peak (in terms of size) of Edward III's transport fleets. After the 1346 expedition the changes in the fleet-raising procedure that had been initiated after 1343 meant that the armadas of the 1350s, although transporting armies of comparable size, were in fact smaller. Indeed, the 1350s transport fleets were more comparable to the 1338 Low Countries expeditions. Table 3.2 compares the size of the royal-led transport fleets deployed to France between 1342 and 1359, and it is clearly shown that the fleet of 1359 was much smaller than those of 1342 and 1346.

Table 3.2 Comparisons between the 1340s fleets and that of 1359

Campaign	Ships	Northern fleet	Southern fleet	Ports	Mariners
Brittany	675	219	444	80	10,420
Crécy	747	216	493	84	15,917
Calais	107	46	61	35	6,527
Reims	446	368	70	87	6,149

Note: During the Brittany campaign twelve ships were foreign; at Crécy thirty eight were foreign and one foreign vessel participated in the siege of Calais. In 1359 eight ships were hired from the Low Countries.

*

So far we have examined the fleets that performed service during royal-led expeditions. However, as part of the English war strategy transport armadas were also raised to carry the king's lieutenants to various locations in France. The importance of these flotillas should not be underestimated. The fact that the earl of Lancaster had been transported on 148 ships in 1345 meant that Edward III faced a much smaller French army on the field at Crécy.²⁵⁶ A similar operation

²⁵⁶ For the earl's fleet, see E101/25/9. In 1346 the duke of Normandy was kept in the south-

was launched in 1355 when the king and the earl of Lancaster sailed in one fleet to northern France, while the Black Prince was transported to Bordeaux. The following analysis examines this latter transport flotilla with the aim of showing, as an example, that the fleets of the lieutenants were an integral part of English naval logistical operations.

The 1355 Transport Fleet for the Black Prince

Rather than merely a footnote in the history of the Hundred Years War, the fleet that transported the Black Prince to Aquitaine in 1355 deserves to be regarded as one of the most important of the period. The first order for the arrest of ships was issued on 10 March 1355, when the ports located between the Thames and the Cinque Ports were requested to provide ships for the passage of the earl of Warwick and others to Gascony.²⁵⁷ On 27 April 1355 more orders were issued for the requisitioning of vessels for the passage of the Prince. All ships above twenty tuns burthen from the ports of the Thames to King's Lynn, King's Lynn to Berwick, London to Exeter and from Exeter to Wales, were to be arrested.²⁵⁸ By 6 May the sheriff of Cornwall was asked to provide bridges to aid the transport of the Prince's horses and on 27 May John de Hoggeshawe, lieutenant of John de Beauchamp, was ordered to accompany the Prince, taking charge of the maritime resources. The following day an order was sent to eight shipmasters to arrest 234 mariners to serve on board their vessels.²⁵⁹ The last request for ships was delivered on 16 July when William Sturmy was to requisition all ships from Bayonne and the Channel Islands and to send them to Southampton for the Prince. However, it is doubtful if these ships made it to the embarkation port as none of the extant payrolls relating to the fleet of 1355 include any vessels from Bayonne or the Channel Islands.²⁶⁰

The requisitioning orders were wide ranging: every possible port was to be searched for available shipping. But how many vessels were finally raised and

west of France fighting Lancaster's forces, a strategy that prevented the duke from marching north in time to participate in the battle of Crécy.

²⁵⁷ *Foedera*, III, i, p. 297.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 298–99.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 299, 300, 302.

²⁶⁰ As the Prince did not sail until 9 September sufficient time was allowed for the Bayonne and Channel Islands ships to join the flotilla assembling at Plymouth. Perhaps one of the reasons for their failure to appear was the frequent storms that lashed England and the Channel during the summer of 1355. The king's fleet was seriously delayed for over a month in July due to the storms: see J. Sumption, *Trial by fire* (London, 1999), pp.166–68, although Sumption confuses the fleets of 1355 by suggesting that the earl of Lancaster had a separate flotilla to the king, as does Hewitt (*Black Prince's expedition*, p. 38). However, C. J. Rogers (*War cruel and sharp*, p. 293, n. 38) argues convincingly that Lancaster was in fact part of the king's fleet and that therefore there were only two flotillas in 1355, not three.

which ports contributed these ships to the fleet? The eventual size of the Prince's transport flotilla of 1355 can be established by examining three Exchequer accounts.²⁶¹ The first of these documents records the wages paid to the crews of forty-nine ships provided by the ports situated on the east coast. Some 271 masters, mariners and pages are decipherable, though the manuscript is in appalling condition.²⁶² The next Exchequer account records the ships contributed by the southern ports that had assembled at Southampton by 8 May.²⁶³ In total, 14 ports provided thirty-nine ships manned by 872 seamen.²⁶⁴ The third account details more ships supplied by the ports situated on the east coast: 20 ports, which furnished ninety-one ships manned by 1,560 masters, mariners and pages.²⁶⁵ If we include the eight vessels recorded in *Foedera* with the information given in the payrolls it is possible to argue that Prince's transport fleet numbered 187 ships, manned by 2,937 mariners that were provided by thirty-five ports.²⁶⁶

²⁶¹ E101/26/36; E101/26/37; E101/26/38.

²⁶² E101/26/36 is in appalling condition and has been marked as 'unfit' by TNA and it is disintegrated in many parts. However, by following the lines made by the clerk from the ship names to the record of the crews wages it is possible to account for forty-nine ships.

²⁶³ E101/26/37. It is worth noting that the ships gathered at Southampton seem to have been solely for the transport of the earls of Warwick and Suffolk, while the prince sailed from Plymouth, see D. Green, 'The household and military retinue of Edward the Black Prince' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Nottingham, 1998), vol. 1, p. 44.

²⁶⁴ The ports that supplied the largest number of ships were the ports of Hannelhoke, Shoreham and Dover (five ships each). Hannelhoke's ships were the largest and as such this port contributed more mariners (124; one ship has no crew size).

²⁶⁵ H. J. Hewitt, *Black Prince's expedition*, pp. 40–42, pp. 179–81 nos 138–67 are the references he cites for the Prince's fleet. Hewitt only utilises one of the surviving accounts (E101/26/37) and does not include E101/26/36 in his discussion of the preparations of the fleet. He notes E101/26/38, but he argues that this account does not make any mention of the mission the ships recorded on it were engaged in, so he does not include it among the ships that transported the Prince. However, because the account starts on 12 July 1355, it could not be related to the king's and Lancaster's transport fleet of that year because on 10 July they were already at sea having sailed from the Thames estuary. Therefore, the likelihood is that E101/26/38 does indeed record the wages paid to the mariners who had transported the Prince to Gascony.

²⁶⁶ E101/26/36 is too badly damaged to see many ports although Grimsby, Barton and Swynflete can be made out. All these except Swynflete appear on E101/26/38. Again the true numbers of seamen operating these vessels are difficult to determine due to the damage on the first account. However, assuming that the ships in the fleet had an average crew size of sixteen, the forty-three ships for which no crew sizes is known could be said to add a further 736 mariners to the fleet. It could therefore be tentatively suggested that the east coast ports supplied 140 (74.8%) ships operated by 2,296 (62.5%) mariners, thus making the east coast by far the largest contributor. The port, which provided the most ships, was Great Yarmouth, which contributed twenty (10.6%) ships crewed by 323 (8.7%) mariners. But the largest single ship was the *Seintemaricog* of 200 tuns, commanded by John Wilydon, but owned by Henry Finch of Winchelsea, and manned by fifty mariners, see E101/26/37, m. 3. Finally, it is also known that the Prince himself sailed on one of the above vessels, the *Cristofre*, which is recorded on one of the Exchequer accounts. See E101/26/38; H. J. Hewitt, *The Black Prince's expedition*, p. 40; D. Green, *The battle of Poitiers, 1356* (Stroud, 2002) p. 28. Three more ships

The actual size of the army under the Prince is difficult to establish because no muster rolls survive for this campaign.²⁶⁷ It is known that the Prince, as part of his indenture with the king, agreed to provide 433 men-at-arms and 700 archers, of which 400 were to be mounted and 300 on foot.²⁶⁸ In addition, the earls of Warwick, Oxford, Salisbury, and Suffolk brought retinues, as did Sir Reginald Cobham and Sir John Lisle. It has been suggested that their combined recruits numbered some 500 men-at-arms and 800 archers, giving an overall strength of 933 men-at-arms and 1,800 archers in the Prince's army.²⁶⁹ This force would have brought with it some 2,000 horses, assuming that not too many serving personnel purchased their mounts in Bordeaux (which was permitted under the terms of the indenture).²⁷⁰ This would mean that, on average, each ship in the fleet transported fourteen men and ten horses.

Table 3.3 Numbers of ships involved in transport fleets, 1324–1360

Total number of English ships	3,099
Southern fleet	1,718
Northern fleet	1,381
Foreign ships	59
Total number of mariners	66,276
Southern mariners	37,181
Northern mariners	27,687

Note: The table includes all the ships that served, such as the twenty-one Cinque Port ships that served in 1325, regardless of the fact that these were not strictly transport ships. The king's own ships have been added to those of the southern fleet. The largest number of ports that were asked

were ordered to be prepared: the *James*, the *Gilane* and the *Margret of the Tower*. These were to be manned and made ready for service in the Prince's fleet (C76/33, mm. 9, 12). However, it is difficult to say whether they actually sailed with the Prince.

²⁶⁷ The best guide to the size and composition of the Prince's army can be found in H. J. Hewitt, *The Black Prince's expedition*, pp. 14–26 and appendix C, which lists, as far as the sources will allow, the men that served under the Prince at Poitiers.

²⁶⁸ BPR, IV, pp. 143–44.

²⁶⁹ D. Green, *Poitiers*, p. 23, who differs slightly from earlier interpretations. For example, A. E. Prince, 'The strength of English armies in the reign of Edward III', *EHR* 46 (1931), pp. 351–71 estimates that Warwick brought 120 men-at-arms, Suffolk, 60; Salisbury, 55; Cobham, 30; Lisle, 60; Hewitt, *The organisation of war*, p. 35 states that Lisle's retinue numbered 20 knights, 39 esquires and 40 mounted archers and Hewitt places the total strength of the Prince's force at 2,600 men (*Black Prince's expedition*, p. 21). However, given the size of the Prince's transport fleet and by comparing it to those fleets where we know how many men were transported in it is likely that the force numbered some 1,500–2,000 men. The ports north of the Thames provided 4,899 of these mariners while the ports south and west of the Thames contributed 2,949 mariners while foreign ports provided 172.

²⁷⁰ BPR, IV, p. 144. It is likely that the number of horses that were shipped to the Gascon expeditions was much smaller than the numbers freighted to the northern campaigns.

to supply ships was eighty-eight in 1324. However, on closer examination the largest number of ports that actually supplied ships to one fleet was the eighty-seven ports that contributed ships to the 1359 transport fleet. Although the table shows that both admiralties contributed roughly the same numbers of ships and mariners, the direct comparative evidence from the 1324–25, 1338–40, 1342 transport fleets and the Crécy ship list show that most transport fleets were composed of ships mainly provided by the south and western ports (for e.g. in 1342 the southern ports supplied 7,051 mariners compared to the 3,369 of the northern ports and 444 ships compared to the 219 of the northern ports). In addition, it must be taken into account the lack of evidence relating to the southern admiralties participation in the major campaigns of 1345, the siege of Calais and the 1359 Reims campaign. If all the evidence material were available for these campaigns it would probably weight the contribution in favour of the south and western ports by 60% to 40%. The table also includes twenty-six ships that were employed to transport diplomatic embassies to the Low Countries in 1337, the Holy Roman Empire from 1338–40, and Brittany in 1341. In addition, there are also a further 194 ships that were used to transport seneschals and king's lieutenants along with their forces to Brittany and Gascony in the years 1342 (Oliver Ingham), 1345 (the earl of Northampton to Brittany), 1345 (Ralph Stafford to Gascony), 1345 (the earl of Derby to Bordeaux), and 1359 (John de Cherleton to Bordeaux). If we include the Prince's fleet with those of the other lieutenants' fleets that sailed between 1337 and 1359 it is possible to say that 413 ships participated in the transportation of these ambassadors, officials and soldiers (this includes the thirteen vessels that transported Ralph Stafford to Bordeaux in 1345). The total number of constables, masters, mariners and pages operating these 413 ships was 8,809. If we make allowances for the 'invisible crews' who served on board thirty-eight of these vessels, the overall number of active seamen could rise to as many as 9,500. Of these 413 vessels it can be stated that 188 ships were contributed by ports north of the Thames and the ports situated south and west of the Thames supplied 215 ships, while five were foreign vessels. See E101/20/16; E101/21/33; E101/23/5; E101/25/3; E101/25/9; E101/27/19; *Foedera*, III, i, pp. 32, 34, 35; CCR, 1341–43, pp. 630–31, 651–52, 664, 666, 697–98; CPR, 1340–43, pp. 567–68, 570. Finally, 1,408 mariners operated foreign vessels. The total number of mariners includes the estimated 'invisible' mariners from various campaigns, whereas the individual admiralty numbers do not.

Maritime Resources and the King's War

This book has set out to investigate the involvement, whether voluntary or unwillingly, of England's maritime communities to the war effort of Edward II and Edward III. The analysis so far has shown the numbers of ships, mariners and ports that were involved in the maritime dimension of the wars. The origins of the participation of so many ports, and their resources, in the wars of the period can be traced back to the campaigns conducted under Edward I, especially those of the 1290s in Scotland and Flanders.¹ Although Edward II's Scottish campaigns were punctuated by long periods of truce the requisitioning of ships continued regularly. But by the time of Edward III's campaigns, particularly those fought on the continent from 1338 onwards, a dramatic change occurred in the organisation and logistics of war. Edward I and Edward II had raised only four fleets for service abroad (the St Sardos fleet has been counted as two), but within four years from 1338 Edward III had already matched this.

What this study has shown is that in terms of ship numbers the scale of the operations from the beginning of Edward III's reign increased dramatically. Edward II's fleet of 284 ships serving in the campaign of 1322 looks rather small as compared with the 675 vessels that Edward III deployed throughout 1342. Change also occurred in the organisation of the fleets. In the Scottish wars ships could be requisitioned and put to sea in relatively small numbers over the course of perhaps a month, which in turn led to large numbers of vessels sailing the seas around Scotland. But there was no requirement for the ships to mass at one particular port and sail out in one large armada. In the preparations for the Scottish campaigns the orders issued for the arrest of ships rarely mention a meeting or embarkation port. The victual ships' destinations were always set because they had to go to either Skinburness or Newcastle. But the military arm of the fleet was usually given no such orders, being normally advised to 'go to sea and attack

¹ A. R. Lewis and T. J. Runyan, *European naval and maritime history, 300–1500* (Bloomington, Ind., 1990), p. 123. Henry III had previously raised a fleet of 288 ships for foreign service and Edward I's 1297 Flanders flotilla numbered some 305 vessels. Such fleets, however, were not regular occurrences.

the king's enemies', or variants on such phrases.² It seems that the military ships, having been placed under the admirals of the north and the south, would usually sail out of their ports and group together in 'county' fleets. Thus, when raised, the ships of Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn would sail up the coast together for extra protection until the admiral gave them specific orders at a later date. What the admirals were handling in the Scottish wars were groups of twenty to forty ships, assembled on an ad hoc basis over a month or two, which all told could add up to 200 or more vessels participating in victual, blockade and naval duties.

It can be seen, therefore, that the role played by the English merchant fleet had changed in two important respects between the Scottish wars of the 1320s and the beginning of the French campaigns in 1338. The numbers of ships deployed had risen dramatically and the organisation and management of these requisitioned fleets had also developed. What Edward III required from 1338 was an organisational structure that allowed his officials to requisition hundreds of ships and place them at one chosen embarkation port all at the same time. That this was achieved on a large scale in 1338, 1340, 1342, 1345, 1346, 1355 and 1359 is testament to the skill of the clerical administrators. As such Edward III's officials were generally successful in raising these large transport fleets, and while it is true that they were exploiting the skeleton of an efficient system already in place from the reigns of Edward I and Edward II, the frequency with which such armadas were raised in the 1330s and 1340s represents a radical departure from the reigns of the previous two kings. Of course, the cumulative experience of the clerical officials was also an important factor in this success. In many ways this latter point is similar to the remilitarisation process that had occurred amongst the landed military class from the 1280s onwards and as the knights and gentry became accustomed to warfare, so too did the clerks.³ In short, there was a bureaucratic dimension to the remilitarisation process. The question which therefore needs to be asked at this point is how did Edward III achieve this level of support and who, if anyone, benefited from the new organisational procedures that he introduced from 1338–1359?

In order to answer such questions, and assess the overall shipping contributions made to the wars by the English merchant fleet, this chapter will be divided into four sections. We begin with an analysis on the administration of the fleets, including a discussion on three issues that arise from the changes made to the organisation of war by Edward III. Chief among these was the increasing tendency to partly 'privatise' large sections of the war. A discussion

² Edward II did operate a policy of blockade between campaigns from 1307 to 1314, and periodically thereafter. But during his campaigns a blockade policy was never attempted, and although he tried to organise combined operations by sea and land these were never successful. Many English shipmasters violated the blockades themselves. See W. Stanford Reid, 'Sea-power in the Anglo-Scottish war', pp. 14–18.

³ See, for example, A. Ayton, 'Sir Thomas Ughtred and the Edwardian military revolution'; D. Simpkin, *The English aristocracy at war*.

on the 1359 logistical operation follows. We concentrate on the Reims campaign because this is the first royal-led transport fleet that bears detailed scrutiny after the capture of Calais. As such it provides us with the perfect opportunity to examine how the capture of this town affected the transportation of English armies to France. Within this section there is also an analysis of the possible effects the Black Death on the availability of shipping. Second, what proportion of a port's shipping resources was requisitioned for campaigns is assessed. Third, because mariners were also a maritime resource the careers of several shipmasters is sketched and the familial relationships among mariners that are illuminated by the sources are discussed. Finally, there is an investigation into the shipping resources of the ports, crew sizes on board ships and the role of the constable.

Developments in Fleet Organisation

From an organisational perspective Edward III inherited a system of raising a fleet from his father, but he exploited his maritime resources more effectively than any of his predecessors. In Chapter 1 it was argued that Edward III employed nine methods to gather ships for his fleets, whereas his father only utilised four.⁴ Although requisition was at the centre of both kings' policy the system they employed varied slightly depending on what the intended expedition's main aim was or how large a fleet was required to transport the awaiting army. For example, in 1342 general arrest orders were issued to the admirals to requisition the flotillas required for that year. They in turn sent officials out to visit ports under their authority. But, in 1346 the admiralties were sub-divided into smaller units with clerks sometimes being given particular ports or 'zones of requisition' in order to raise sufficient ships. There were still two admirals in 1346, but requisition zones did not respect the natural divisions between the admiralties at the River Thames. Because the fleet of 1346 was planned from the outset to be the largest of the reign so far, a more thorough way of exploiting the available maritime resources was required, and as a consequence individual clerks were ordered to concentrate their efforts on smaller geographical areas, although the admirals still held overall authority. Yet, by this stage of the war the administrative and organisational system had already been developed to include mixed fleets; raised partly in the traditional way by requisition and partly by means of private hire.

This privatisation can be traced back to the Scottish campaigns of the mid-1330s. However, it seems that the key moment for this new development was 1336. This was an important year for Edward III for it marked the end of several

⁴ Edward II employed the use of requisition, the Cinque Ports, demands to ports to supply ships and on one occasion a direct agreement with port burgesses. The king's ships are not included here because their numbers were only small.

years of intense personal participation in the northern theatre of operations (he was involved in 1341 and 1356, but only for a short raids). As such from the latter part of 1336 the king seems to have left the system of victual supply entirely in the hands of several men. Foremost amongst these were Thomas and William Melcheburn, two shipmasters, shipowners and merchants from King's Lynn. The Melcheburns accounted for what they supplied either directly through the Exchequer or through the receiver at Berwick. The first method was the most important, as it seems to have been a recent development. In many ways a new system was brought into operation in which private merchants, like the Melcheburns, could now work directly with the Exchequer, thus reducing the role of the receiver of Berwick, who sometimes had to source his own supplies independently of the government.⁵ Private merchants had supplied armies before but not on this scale and not over a sustained period. No longer were general purveyance writs issued for campaigns in Scotland and by this stage of his northern war, Edward III seems to have decided to hold on to what he had so far gained, through the employment of contract armies and garrisons, which in turn were supplied by merchants who could utilise their own private contacts in the markets. This 'private' system of supply has been regarded as unsuccessful, but this conclusion was based on evidence concerning Manentius Francis, a foreign merchant, who faced problems, and who probably did not have the 'market contacts' that the Melcheburns had developed throughout their long careers as shipmasters/owners and merchants.⁶ Indeed, during this period we do not find regular complaints by the Melcheburns about lack of payment by the Exchequer. In fact the main problem with the supply operation was the distribution of the victuals from Newcastle and Berwick to the garrisons, not the collection and dispatch of supplies from the counties to the depots. On the other hand, the victual arrangements for royal armies (and the forces of Edward's lieutenants who campaigned in France) after 1338 still relied on purveyance. It was not, therefore, that this intrusive way of raising supplies ceased to operate; it was just transferred to what Edward thought was the more important theatre of his

⁵ By 1338 the receiver generally worked directly with the merchants to supply his needs. The days of the receiver having to travel sometimes vast distances to source his own supplies had ceased. On the role of the receiver in the earlier period, see D. Cornell, 'English castle garrisons', pp. 65–66.

⁶ Citing the failures of Manentius Francis, C. Candy, 'The Scottish wars of Edward III', p. 259 states that 'private supply was not successful'. In addition, D. S. Bachrach, ('Military logistics', pp. 429–30) notes that private supply could not work effectively in conjunction with general purveyance owing to one method depriving the other of available transportation: yet, the Melcheburns and the de la Poles of Hull supplied English armies with general purveyance concurrently and the clerks employed by the crown did not impede their work. However, these two sets of merchants usually relied on sea transportation rather than overland travel. In addition the Melcheburns owned four ships and the Poles owned at least two. As such it was easier for such men to organise transportation rather than merchants who relied on hiring ships.

wars. This system was, however, modified in the sense that particular clerks, such as William Dunstaple, were usually placed at the head of purveyance teams, who worked in close co-operation with the sheriffs of the counties. They consequently tended to act more favourably towards the local population, which in turn lessened tensions between Edward III's government and the political community. This increasing use of a more privatised system of supply partly explains the lack of available evidence on purveyance during the campaigns conducted in 1350s. It seems reasonable to assume that throughout the 1350s, due to political considerations, the crown favoured supply on a more privatised basis, which in turn gives the impression that far less effort was made by the government in securing victuals for its armies. Yet, it is beyond doubt that at the outset of the 1359 expedition, for example, Edward's forces were sufficiently well supplied.⁷ Indeed, it seems reasonable to assume that the capture of Calais altered the arrangements for the collection of victuals. Forces arriving at Calais could now take foodstuffs out of the town's well-stocked storehouses, which no doubt would have been provisioned with extra provender in the preceding months before the invasion.⁸ This operation was probably managed through merchants and the receiver at Calais rather than through general purveyance orders. This method of supply had the advantage of reducing friction between the king and his subjects, while at the same time maintaining popular support for the war.

Privatisation of the victualling dimension of the war effort was taken to its next logical stage after the Breton campaign of 1342 and during the expedition of 1345 and those of the 1350s. During this period it gradually became common for a proportion of the land-based forces to arrange their own transportation by means of private hire agreements between retinue captains and ship owners/masters. This had advantages for all parties involved in the wars. The king benefited because he and his administrative staff were now freed from the burdensome task of requisitioning large fleets.⁹ They still did this for the king's lieutenants serving in Gascony and Brittany, but the task was made easier by only having to arrest ships from one particular admiralty and the flotillas were much smaller than those assembled for the royal fleets. Indeed, from 1345, when the king required multiple transport fleets for himself and his lieutenants, it is probable that one of the two admiralties was reserved for the retinue captains'

⁷ For evidence on the size of the supply train in 1359, see Y. H. Haarari, 'Strategy and supply', p. 316.

⁸ See, for example, S. J. Burley, 'The victualling of Calais', pp. 52–55 for a discussion of how these supplies might have been managed. It is worthy of note that in 1355 and 1359 Edward's immediate destination was Calais, where supplies would have been stockpiled waiting for his arrival.

⁹ This new development in many ways mirrored the indenture system, which it has been noted freed the crown from burdensome financial and bureaucratic procedures. In short by shifting the onus of recruitment, and fleet raising, on to the captains the government saved itself valuable resources. On the suggestion that this eased bureaucratic pressure off the government, see M. Strickland and R. Hardy, *The great warbow*, p. 199.

private arrangements. Thus, in 1345 the fleet that transported Henry of Grosmont to Gascony included only a small number of vessels from the northern admiralty. Furthermore, in 1355 and 1359 very few ships from the southern ports are recorded on the payrolls drawn up by royal administration. The retinue captains also benefited from this system because they could now arrange their own transportation, thereby reducing the time they spent waiting at the port of embarkation because they were able to agree first hand with the shipmaster the exact date of arrival and departure. For the crown this had the added bonus of reducing the supply needs of large numbers of men waiting at the ports. The ship owners/masters were also favoured by this new approach because they would not be forced to stay under arrest for lengthy periods in the port of embarkation. They would know exactly the intended length of their service and they would still be paid their wages up-front by the captain. Just how important this could be is indicated by the circumstances of 1342, when over 140 ships were held under arrest for over two months before sailing to Brittany while they waited for the army to gather. The advantage in transferring some of the burden to the magnates had been steadily recognised from the Scottish wars of 1334 and 1335, when it became their responsibility to honour the contracts they had made with the crown: to find the number of men they had agreed to serve with, and to ensure that the men raised in this way were sufficiently equipped. This took away many burdensome recruitment tasks from the royal officers and the royal household.¹⁰ It would seem, therefore, that after 1342, and when multiple transport fleets were requisitioned, all the participants involved in the privatisation of the royal transport armadas gained from this development. Of course, there was an element of trust built into the system, in that the captains relied upon the crown to pay them for organising their own transport arrangements.

However, it is probable that the *regard* payment, which in part was rendered to the retinue captains in advance of a campaign, was intended to cover the added costs that were incurred when they were obliged to make their own shipping arrangements. It is noteworthy that *regard* as a system of up-front payment was introduced in 1345, which coincides exactly with the year that also saw the introduction of the new method of raising a fleet.¹¹ *Regard* was a quarterly payment of 100 marks that each retinue captain received for every thirty men-at-arms in his retinue, and it is argued here that part of it was offered to enable him to arrange his men's maritime transportation requirements. In the period covered by this book it was normal for a shipowner to charge 2s for transporting a horseman and 6d for a footman; however, to hire a single craft would cost one mark for

¹⁰ See C. Candy, 'The Scottish wars of Edward III', p. 154.

¹¹ *Regard* was a flexible way of increasing payments to soldiers serving in expeditions without actually altering the daily wage rates. For example, in the 1370s *regard* was doubled so that the crown did not have to continue with horse compensation payments, which it has been already noted were administratively expensive to produce and imperfect, see A. Ayton, 'English armies in the fourteenth century', pp. 24–25.

both the outward and return voyage.¹² But it was more expensive to hire shipping for transporting horses and men to a theatre of war. For instance, in 1343 Jack Faukes and his companion paid 20s to charter a vessel for a single journey, and then had to expend a further sum, at least half a mark, on hiring boats to take them out to the waiting ship at Dover, and another small boat at Wissant.¹³ Therefore, the issue to a retinue captain of 100 marks, for the transportation of thirty men-at-arms, seems to be a sum of the right order for his transportation requirements.¹⁴ The connection between the payment of *regard* to retinue captains and the need to compensate them for the shipping of their horses is further indicated by the fact that *regard* was not generally paid for service in Scotland.¹⁵ Of course *regard* was not issued solely for shipping requirements as some soldiers still had their transportation provided for them. Nevertheless, the introduction of this payment was surely in response to the extra burdens of war that the crown was increasingly transferring to the gentry in this period.

In addition to the logistical problems faced by Edward III during the 1342 Brittany campaign, and the experimentation on the organisation of war that occurred throughout the early 1340s, the capture of Calais in 1347 was also another driver towards the privatisation of war during this period. Control of Calais now meant that the king no longer had to transport an army in one large fleet. His forces could now arrive at a continental port, safe in English hands, over a period of several weeks. This meant the crown did not have to raise huge transport fleets, but could instead requisition smaller number of vessels in the traditional way, while a selection of the retinue captains (usually from the royal household) organised their own shipping. Only through having a safe port in Northern France was such a system possible.¹⁶ Edward still paid directly for the

¹² M. C. Hill, 'Jack Faukes, king's messenger, and his return journey to Avignon in 1343', *EHR* 58 (1942), pp. 19–30, p. 24.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ By using the information contained in the account of Faukes it is possible to suggest that it would cost 3 marks to transport each man-at-arms and his horses. Therefore, to transport thirty men-at-arms it would come to roughly 90 marks. Indeed, in the 1390s the future Henry IV paid 22s 4d to transport eleven horses from Dover to Calais, see S. Rose, *The medieval sea*, p. 98.

¹⁵ On the system of *regard* and the date it was introduced, see A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, pp. 110–14. This introduction of *regard* also affected the practice of drafting the indentures of war, which generally became more precise in their language during the French war, see *Private indentures for life service in peace and war, 1278–1476*, Camden fifth series, 3, ed. M. Jones and S. Walker (London, 1994), pp. 21–22. Captains serving in campaigns in Scotland, such as Richard II's in 1385, did not usually receive *regard* payments. This was surely because the captains had no need to organise shipping for campaigns in Scotland. On the 1385 campaign, see N. B. Lewis, 'The last medieval summons of the English feudal levy, 13 June 1385', *EHR* 73 (1958), pp. 1–26.

¹⁶ Although the English possessed Bordeaux the length of the crossing to that port meant fleets, as a rule, sailed as one at the same time.

county levies' transport needs, and those of his lieutenants.¹⁷ Another advantage of partly privatising the fleet-raising system was that it seemed to promote a greater willingness on the part of shipowners to have their vessels requisitioned, or rather hired, for service. It has already been noted that Edward I and Edward II sometimes met with refusals from shipmasters to serve in their fleets. Indeed, this problem afflicted some of Edward III's expeditions, particularly between 1337 and 1340, when hundreds of vessels failed to serve under Walter de Mauny.¹⁸ This problem had wholly disappeared by the time of the 1345 campaign, which saw the development of the partial privatisation model of fleet building. This reduced the friction between the government and the port communities, which, in turn, encouraged a more rapid response by shipowners in allowing their vessels to be requisitioned.¹⁹

If we now discuss these naval 'privatisation' initiatives within a broader perspective it would seem that 1342, 1347 and 1359 are the three key points in the development of this system. In 1342 the crown had attempted to organise a ferry system mainly through the existing Wardrobe apparatus. That this brought problems is not surprising for not only was Edington required to record the complex *vadia guerre* section of his accounts, and thus manage the land-based army, but he also took on the responsibility of organising the *vadia nautarum* and the administration of a huge naval operation. This had not been an issue in previous expeditions such as 1338, because of their relatively modest size. Furthermore, Edward had also negotiated with the Low Countries princes months before the expedition began. These alliances provided troops that the Wardrobe did not need to record and a safe harbour in which the English could arrive at their leisure. Although in 1342 some of Edington's burden had been taken away by making John Kermond responsible for the retinues waiting at Plymouth, it was nevertheless an enormous and complex undertaking for the Wardrobe to manage. In fact the Breton expedition of 1342 is notable for many 'new' developments in the organisation and conduct of war. For example, the mixed retinue structure (the same number of men-at-arms and mounted archers in each captain's retinue) of the army provided the blueprint for many of the future French expeditions.²⁰

Of course privatisation may well have been further developed during the preparations for the 1345 expedition, but the loss of the Wardrobe accounts renders a full investigation of this campaign impossible. What we do know is that the payments issued to arresting officials and the mariners of Bayonne in 1345 totalling £238 1s 6d was rather small for a fleet that would have needed to

¹⁷ For example, there is evidence that archers were still being arrayed in 1345 for the Flanders expedition, see *CPR*, 1343–45, p. 516.

¹⁸ *C47/2/30*.

¹⁹ C. J. Rogers, *War cruel and sharp*, p. 295 notes how the fleets of 1355 were raised quickly: two months from planning to sailing, although bad weather delayed the voyage for months.

²⁰ See A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, p. 14.

transport the army Edward had under his command in that year, suggesting that an element of privatisation may have been involved in the 1345 campaign.²¹ Nevertheless, as a consequence of the issues that presented themselves in 1342, we see in the organisation of the siege of Calais in 1347, the next well-documented campaign, a new approach taken by the Wardrobe in the organisation of large campaigns. This essentially meant that during the siege the administrative organisation of the war was divided into three separate areas. First, Walter Wetwang, the keeper of the Wardrobe, seems to have managed the bureaucracy surrounding the land-based retinues. Second, his colleague William Huggate organised a separate ferry fleet that was used from June to September in order to deliver reinforcements to the siege and repatriate casualties. Third, the two admirals, John Howard and John Montgomery, accounted separately with the Exchequer in England for the flotillas they raised to blockade Calais.²² This in effect eased the administrative burden on the Wardrobe. The success of this operation certainly made an impact and seems to have added to the spirit of administrative experimentation that was evident during the 1340s.²³ By 1359, the next royal-led expedition for which we have detailed surviving documentation, we find evidence of a system in place in which naval logistical organisation was divided into distinctive administrative areas; partly privatised fleets organised by retinue captains and the traditional Wardrobe administered armadas, in short a hybrid bureaucratic process. Although at first glance it may look like this should have been the other way round, in that the king's transport fleets would be raised by the traditional method, because he had the bureaucratic apparatus with him in the form of the Wardrobe, the crown sought to ease the burden on the Wardrobe and the simplest way of doing this was to transfer some of the responsibility for transportation arrangements directly to the retinue captains. This also had the added bonus of creating fewer complaints through parliament from representatives of the merchant classes. These lessons had been learnt through 1342 and 1343 with added impetus provided by the siege of Calais in 1347. By 1359 a new transportation system was in place that had been developed over the preceding expeditions.

However, the experiments in the organisation of the maritime dimension of Edward III's French war, described above, should not be seen in isolation, and from the inception of the indenture system potential was always there for the kings to partly privatise areas of their war effort. In 1336 and 1337, Henry of Lancaster and the earl of Warwick led the Scottish war with armies raised by exploiting existing recruitment networks, paid for by the crown, and supplied by merchants using their own methods and contacts in the markets, and in 1346

²¹ E101/390/12, fols 2r–3r.

²² Evidence for the ferry fleet is recorded in E101/390/12. The admirals accounts of 1347 are listed in E101/21/36, m. 4; E101/25/24.

²³ A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, pp. 96–120 describes the experiments that took place in the 1340s.

English forces operating in Gascony and Normandy had large contingents that were raised through the exploitation of retinue captains' military recruitment ties. At the same time the transport fleets had been added to the list of elements in the Edwardian military machine that could be raised through the private initiative of the king's companions in arms.

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The partial privatisation of fleet raising creates problems for the historian wishing to analyse how the kingdom's maritime resources were utilised during expeditions from 1345 onwards. The Reims campaign of 1359–60 perfectly exemplifies this problem. As such this expedition is important in a number of respects. First, this was only the second major campaign in the north of France after the capture of Calais and it highlights the way in which the control of that port affected the organisation of transport fleets. Second, it is the only major royal campaign after 1342 for which we have full Wardrobe accounts and related Exchequer evidence. Third, given that it occurred in the post-Black Death period, it provides an excellent opportunity to examine how the maritime resources of the king were affected by this calamitous event.

It has already been suggested that the capture of Calais allowed Edward to prepare his continental expeditions differently. Though of course, this was only true for those campaigns that were launched through this port: expeditions such as those of Crécy or Agincourt, which required a landing in hostile territory, were still transported in one large armada. Any major campaign channelled through Calais had the advantage transferring more of the burden to those serving in the army. Edward's martial reputation at this stage allowed him such an option, as many men were more than willing to fight under his banner. Support for Edward's French war escalated from 1345 onwards on a wave of enthusiasm generated by Henry of Grosmont's expeditions in Aquitaine, Edward III's victory at Crécy and the Black Prince at Poitiers. This, coupled with the lure of potential booty and fame, meant that retinue captains were willing to take on extra responsibilities when it came to campaigning. Of course, as this analysis has shown, Edward did not entirely neglect his side of the bargain: he provided a large fleet that transported a section of the land army and large numbers of horses from the retinues awaiting passage to Calais in 1359. By controlling Calais the king could now requisition smaller flotillas that were used on a ferry system basis in order to freight armies to northern France. It is worthy of note that the army of 1369 led by John of Gaunt and the 1370 force led by Robert Knolles were transported in relays from the south east of England to Calais or northern France, and this trend continued into the following century, except in rare occasions such as 1415.²⁴

²⁴ J. Sumption, *Divided houses*, pp. 36, 73.

The major strategic option that the capture of Calais gave to Edward was the ability to deploy smaller transport fleets. Indeed, the Calais-bound transport fleets of the 1360s and 1370s generally numbered 300 ships, whereas the armadas of the 1340s and 1350s had ranged between 403 and 747 vessels.²⁵ It must be noted, however, that there has been criticism of the crown's ability to organise transport fleets after the resumption of the war in 1369.²⁶ The main point to arise from this view is that the accumulated expertise that Edward's officials had gained over the last three decades had been lost, and that after nearly ten years of peace the new clerks and government officials who had entered service did not possess the same detailed knowledge as their predecessors had in the early stages of the war, which in turn created problems in the fleet-raising procedures. As we have seen above in Chapter 1 it was noted that in the 1330s and 1340s there was continuity of officials involved in organising naval forces, while in the 1350s, 1360s and 1370s, although relatively stable, there was a remarkable lack of continuity at the sharp end of the administration (the level of high Wardrobe and Exchequer officials). Even more striking was the substitution of sergeants-at-arms for clerks in the organisation of fleets, dealt with in Chapter 1.

The task of raising a fleet might also have become more difficult because of structural changes in English shipping by the third quarter of the century. In short it is possible that officials found it difficult to find sufficient numbers of ships.²⁷ While this may be a possibility, without performing a systematic survey of English shipping in this decade it would be impossible to draw firm conclusions on this issue. It is true that in the 1370s ports that had never been called upon to provide ships did so, but this should not be taken as evidence of a decline in ports elsewhere in the kingdom. Over the course of several decades a port's economic wellbeing would undoubtedly ebb and flow, but whilst some towns declined others certainly prospered.²⁸ Further because some of these 'new' ports were situated in Gascony their involvement in shipping provision probably

²⁵ See, for example, J. Sherborne, 'Shipping and manpower', p. 170. Sherborne notes that the two fleets raised in 1369 numbered between 180 and 250 ships, and one fleet in 1373 only numbered 157 vessels. It is important to note that the capture of Calais allowed such fleets to be raised. As such it is not that the crown failed to raise larger fleets than it had done some twenty years previously, only that the king by this stage of the war did not require armadas of the size that operated during the first twenty years of the conflict with France.

²⁶ See, for example, J. Sumption, *Divided houses*, pp. 130–45. Sumption draws attention to the problems during the summer of 1372 when he suggests that the English crown failed to organise its fleets on time owing to a shortage of ships, which he blames partly on the Black Death.

²⁷ See, for example, G. R. Cushway, 'The lord of the sea', pp. 359–65.

²⁸ The ports of Plymouth and Dartmouth developed because of the war in this period, whereas Great Yarmouth declined, see W. R. Childs, 'Devon's overseas trade in the late middle ages', *The new maritime history of Devon: from early times to the late eighteenth century*, vol. 1, ed. M. Duffy et al. (Exeter, 1992), pp. 79–89; A. Saul, 'Great Yarmouth in the hundred years war'.

owed more to the fact that, after 1360, the duchy of Aquitaine became more involved in the warfare through the interest of the Black Prince and John of Gaunt.²⁹ That some decline occurred is likely and the Black Death and the war would undoubtedly have played a role in this. We shall return shortly to the post-plague economy. Yet in the face of any supposed decline it is important to stress large fleets were raised in 1359, and throughout the 1370s and 1380s.³⁰ For example, Gaunt's campaigns in France, Portugal and Spain and Robert Knolles' expedition of 1370 all required sizeable fleets of over 200 ships.³¹ Moreover, in the latter part of Edward III's reign there was a lack of direct involvement by the king in military affairs, which must have had an effect on the organisation of war. Finally, in the 1380s English policy gradually shifted in the direction of Spain and Portugal and the mood in Richard II's court was for general peace with France. As such English naval policy altered from one of deployment of large transport fleets to one of smaller proactive naval patrols.

In addition to all the above, a further explanation for the seeming weaknesses in the organisation of war can be found in the changing nature of the French conflict after 1369. In the period 1338–59 Edward had deployed rapidly moving armies in France as an invader with few territorial acquisitions, especially in northern France, to defend. On the resumption of hostilities in 1369 Edward found himself increasingly fighting a defensive war for the protection of the lands that he gained as a result of the treaty of Brétigny in 1360. Many of the military problems now faced by the English were also related to a reinvigorated French army. Under Charles V the French had adopted new strategic and tactical approaches to the conflict. The most important of these was that they usually declined the opportunity to engage English armies in direct battle, choosing instead to harry the flanks and rear of invading English forces whilst disrupting lines of communication and supply. Added to this the French now favoured a piecemeal approach to regaining territory whereby they tempted local lords back into their allegiance or sent smaller, better equipped, forces into areas where no substantial English army was operating to regain castles and towns. This created a domino effect in some areas and French lords nominally loyal to Edward III chose to move closer to the French king. In addition to this a new series of fiscal and military reforms were initiated, which in effect created a small standing French army directly under the command of the king.³² As such in the early 1370s Edward became reactive to French assaults and this had the effect of making his fleet preparations appear haphazard as he first turned one way and then the other in response to news from the front.

²⁹ The ports were located along the Gironde River, see BL, Add MS 37494, fols 17v–36v.

³⁰ Although it is true that these latter fleets contained larger numbers of hired foreign vessels than the armadas of the 1330s and 1340s.

³¹ BL, Add MS 37494, fols, 17r–36v; E101/28/24; E101/29/1; E101/29/36; E101/30/24.

³² See, for example, J. Sumption, *Divided houses*, who discusses these French reforms throughout.

Between 1369 and 1372, therefore, the English lost the initiative which they had enjoyed in the earlier phase of the conflict. It is also likely that the problems faced by Edward III in raising his fleets during the period 1369–72 relate squarely to the timescales involved. To take the example of 1372. In this year, and because of a renewed French assault on English territory in France, Edward planned to sail to that kingdom and engage the French in battle. Yet the king only began to requisition vessels towards the end of March when he intended to sail in July. This, as noted in Chapter 3, did not give the officials sufficient time to organise these fleets. Finally, after 1369 many of the famous commanders that had helped create the impression that English arms were unassailable were either dead or incapacitated through illness or old age, and many of the men who replaced them in naval matters such as Ralph Spigurnell, Robert Ashton and Philip Courtenay were simply not of the same calibre as men such as John Montgomery, Guy Brian and Robert Morley. Further, the French, in admirals such as Jean de Vienne, found capable commanders in an age when the English were lacking similar men. Fleet raising after 1350 cannot be viewed in administrative vacuum, or even as a mere element of a broader war effort. Mobilisation of war was highly sensitive to changes in the available resources and the effects of the Black Death after 1348 could have impacted significantly on the availability of both shipping and manpower.

The impact of mortality due to the Black Death of 1348 could have affected Edward's fleet preparations, and it is possible that the resulting deaths from the disease among the seafarer communities left severe shortages of manpower in this sector of society. Indeed, once recent commentator argues that when in 1377 the Castilians captured thirty-nine English ships the loss of this number of vessels would be 'felt by requisitioning officers for years to come'.³³ The Black Death must have had some impact on maritime resources as port towns were the first to feel the effects of this disease. Cramped conditions and the on board presence of rats usually meant ships' companies became infected before spreading the illness into the ports. Nevertheless, most of the research centred on the Black Death has tended to concentrate on villages and urban populations in general rather than the maritime communities in particular. However, most studies seem to suggest that anywhere between 25 and 50 per cent of the population suffered death during 1348–49.³⁴ Yet the picture was more complex than these figures

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 239.

³⁴ C. Platt, *King death: the Black Death and its aftermath in late medieval England* (London, 1996), pp. 9–10; J. L. Bolton, *The medieval English economy, 1150–1500* (London, 1980), p. 61; R. Horrox, ed. and trans., *The Black Death* (Manchester, 1994), pp. 230, 235, 238; C. Phillpotts, 'Plague and reconstruction: bishops Edington and Wykeham at Highclere, 1346–1404', *Fourteenth century England*, 1, ed. N. Saul (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 115–29, p. 119; S. Inwood, *A history of London* (London, 1998), pp. 114–15; M. M. Postan, *The medieval economy and society* (London, 1975), pp. 33, 41. C. Platt, *Medieval Southampton*, appendix 1, p. 262 suggests that the pre-Black Death population of Southampton would have been 2,500–2,800 with the post plague population reaching 1,600; so roughly a 40–50% reduction in the towns

show. For example estimates of mortality greatly vary between communities, with some towns suffering high mortality rates, while others escaped relatively unscathed. In addition, research has also shown that, in most cases, the survivors of the disease were in their early twenties or thirties, which aided a swift recovery.³⁵

One way of establishing how the plague affected the raising of a fleet is to calculate, where the evidence permits, the pre-Black Death mean tunnage and crew sizes of transport fleets and to compare them to those fleets requisitioned after the plague, to see if there is any significant fall in the size of both ships and crews. Of the 446 ships involved in transport operations pre 1348, for which we have both tunnage and crew sizes, we can calculate a total tunnage of 41,347.³⁶ This gives us a mean of 92.7 tuns for each vessel. The total numbers of mariners serving on these ships was 16,294 (102 of the ships only come with the master's name so an average of 29 has been applied to these which is calculated from the crew numbers we do know) giving an average crew size of 36.5.³⁷ Tunnage figures are more frequently available after 1348 giving greater scope for comparison with pre-plague conditions. When the same methodology is applied to post-1348 fleets, out of 659 vessels with tonnages we find a total of 34,696 tuns, which average of 53 tuns per ship, and an average crew size of sixteen.³⁸ On this evidence the plague seems to have encouraged the operation of a large fleet of small ships. Nevertheless, factors other than the Black Death may have played a part in reducing the size of English vessels and it has been argued that the collapse in the Bordeaux wine trade in the second half of the fourteenth century was more responsible for a reduction in the tunnage of the English merchant marine than any other factor.³⁹

We must be very cautious here, however, because the post-Black Death tunnage figures are heavily reliant on the 1359 Reims campaign, an unusual fleet that even during the process of requisition was not to include any ships of over

population. However, he notes that the post plague population figures based on the 1377 poll tax are not a totally accurate reflection of the town's population due to the war and other factors; G. H. Martin, 'The borough and the merchant community of Ipswich, 1317-1422' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Oxford, 1955), p. 181 notes that in Ipswich the Black Death did not 'sweep away all the rulers of the town'.

³⁵ P. Ziegler, *The Black Death* (Harmondsworth, 1969), p. 169.

³⁶ These figures should be seen as the low-end estimate of tunnage owing to the nature of the evidence. See, for example, R. W. Unger, 'The tonnage of Europe's merchant fleets, 1300-1800', *American Neptune* 52 (1992), pp. 247-61, pp. 254-55 and Table 2, p. 260, in which Unger suggests that in total the English merchant marine was at least 70,000 tons.

³⁷ E101/17/35; E101/19/14; E101/19/22; E101/19/39; E101/21/7; E101/21/10; E101/21/12; E101/25/24; BL, Add MS 7967.

³⁸ E101/26/37; E101/26/38; E101/27/22; E101/27/23; E101/27/24; E101/27/25; E101/27/36; E101/29/1.

³⁹ R. W. Unger, 'The tonnage of Europe's merchant fleets', p.255.

76 tuns.⁴⁰ The ships that participated in this transport armada were smaller in tunnage than would normally be expected. Of the 411 ships for which size is recorded, 186 (45%) were between ten and nineteen tuns, while 117 (28%) were between twenty and thirty-nine tuns, and 69 (17%) ships were between forty and one hundred tuns. Only thirty-nine (9%) ships in the Reims fleet were greater than 100 tuns. Indeed, if we look at the post Black Death tunnage figures in general (including the Reims transport fleet) 202 (31%) ships were between ten and twenty tuns, 205 (31.1%) between twenty-one and forty tuns, 151 (23%) fell in the forty-one to one hundred tun category and one-hundred-and-one (15%) were over 100 tuns. When we examine the tunnage figures for the pre-Black Death ships then we find different results. There were 167 (37%) ships of more than one hundred tuns, while 189 (42.3%) of the 446 ships from before 1348 were between forty and one hundred tuns, 86 (19.2%) fell between twenty-one and forty tuns while only four were less than 20 tuns. It can be seen that from 1359, as compared with the period 1338–35, more vessels seem to be requisitioned for service that were between ten and forty tuns. In addition to this numerous vessels from the Reims fleet would, perhaps, appear in later fleets. It may be however that only the larger vessels from the Reims fleet were requisitioned in later fleets. Ipswich, for example supplied 105 ships to the fleets between 1324 and 1373 and of the twelve ships they provided in 1359 only four went onto to serve in future fleets, and none of these vessels was under 70 tuns.⁴¹ This suggests that only the larger vessels from 1359 were targeted for service in later fleets.

Therefore, although it seems, on the surface, that the ships were becoming smaller in the middle of the fourteenth century, closer examination reveals that it is the unusually small tonnages of the vessels engaged in the Reims transport fleet that bring the mean tunnage figure down. How representative of the English merchant fleet were these 1359 ships is difficult to answer. The ships that transported the Black Prince to Gascony in 1355 were, on average, 60 tuns burthen. If we examine the 125 ships that participated in the 1338 fleet, that we have tunnage figures for, we arrive at a mean of 28 tuns.⁴² Looking forward to

⁴⁰ *Foedera*, III, I, p. 412.

⁴¹ C47/2/30, m. 2; C47/2/35; E36/204; *Norwell*; BL, Add MS 7967, fols 98v, 99r; BL, Stowe MS 553 fol. 77r; BL, Add MS 37494, fols 19d, 24v; E372/179, m. 44; E101/16/40; E101/18/3; E101/18/31; E101/19/32; E101/20/34; E101/21/7; E101/25/24, nos 6–10; E101/26/18, m. 1; E101/26/38, m. 2; E101/27/25, m. 2; E101/29/1, m. 1.

⁴² Although the ships from this fleet are recorded in the Wardrobe book of William Norwell there are some Exchequer particulars that are linked into the Wardrobe system for this fleet, which do provide tunnage figures, see E101/21/7; E101/21/10; E101/21/12. In addition, a reduction in the population would not automatically lead to smaller ships. Building and paying for a vessel required a considerable outlay of valuable capital and it is more likely that a shipowner would continue to use the ships he currently possessed but allow smaller crews to operate them. For example, in 1336 the Exchequer provided £666 13s 4d in order to build the *Philippe* (the mast alone came to £10, see M. Prestwich, *Armies and warfare*, p. 267). Furthermore, in 1422 the barge *Marie Bretton* was sold to John Tendryng for £40, a significant

the fleets that sailed after 1359, we know that 593 vessels served in 1369, 1370 and 1373. Of these 593 ships we know the tunnage figures for 208 vessels and of these, 78 ships (37%) were under 40 tuns.⁴³ Indeed, it has been pointed out that there was no dramatic fall in ship size in the fourteenth century and throughout this period eighty-one per cent of ships in the Anglo-Gascon wine trade were of less than 100 tuns but sixteen per cent were between 150 and 200 tuns.⁴⁴ Hull was certainly re-engaging ships of over 100 tuns in its wine trade with Bordeaux in the later fourteenth century and in 1385 nine ships from Hull were sent to Bordeaux with a total tunnage of 1,261.⁴⁵

The crew sizes certainly seem to have decreased during the post plague period; however, the overall mean is also affected by the unusually small crew attachments that served in the Reims transport fleet. And although there had been a reduction in the volume of trade that exceeded that of the population after the Black Death, it seems that, if anything, the same ships were being operated but by smaller crews. Why the Reims transport ships were smaller than usual is intriguing. Perhaps the simplest explanation lies in the fact that after the capture of Calais in 1347 any expedition using the port as a disembarkation point did not require large ships because of the narrow sea crossing between southern England and Calais.⁴⁶ That this was in the mind of the organisers of the 1359 expedition is evidenced by the fact that the requisition officers were specifically ordered not to arrest ships over 76 tuns.⁴⁷ It was also cheaper for the crown to requisition and employ smaller vessels, with smaller crews, on a 'ferry system' basis, whereby the ships would make more than one crossing. Looking further forward, the Black Death does not seem to have had any adverse effects on the transport fleets sailing in the 1370s, for which the English merchant fleet was still providing large vessels. This can be seen by examining the flotilla that transported John of Gaunt from Sandwich to France between April and September 1373, a fleet that averaged 77 tuns per ship.⁴⁸ Although far from perfect, the evidence suggests that perhaps the only significant effect of the Black Death on merchant shipping was to reduce the size of crews.⁴⁹

sum, and it is likely that this ship would have cost considerably more to build from new, see W. J. Carpenter Turner, 'The building of the *GraceDieu*, *Valentine* and *Falconer*', p. 70.

⁴³ BL, Add MS 37494, fols 17v-41v; E101/29/36; E101/30/28.

⁴⁴ . W. Unger, *The ship in the medieval economy, 600-1600* (London, 1980), p. 163; W. R. Childs, *The trade and shipping of Hull*, p. 23.

⁴⁵ W. R. Childs, *The trade and shipping of Hull*, p. 23.

⁴⁶ It must also be noted that tunnage figures are notoriously difficult to interpret, see F. C. Lane, 'Tonnage, medieval and modern', *ECHR* 17 (1964), pp. 213-33, pp. 216-18.

⁴⁷ *Foedera*, III, I, p. 412.

⁴⁸ BL, Add MS 37494, fols 17v-24v. Although this account contains the names of more ships, only 112 have their tonnages recorded with them. The total tunnage from these 112 vessels was 8,643.

⁴⁹ The custom accounts rarely provide the size of individual ships and generally only give an indication as to what they carried. For example, E122/56/24 records thirty-seven ships from

Port Resources

So far throughout this book we have analysed, and assessed, the contributions made by the merchant fleet to the wars of Edward II and Edward III between 1320 and 1360. However, in order to fully understand the totality of the service provided by the merchant marine it is necessary to calculate how many of the ships that served in the forty years covered by this study were individual vessels. Table 4.1 shows how many ships served throughout the Scottish and French wars, but this table does not take account of those ships that served more than once. Indeed, there are many ships, commanded by the same men, and from the same port, that served in more than one fleet. These should, therefore, only be counted once when trying to assess the true overall shipping contribution made by the English merchant marine to naval operations between 1320 and 1360.

Table 4.1 Total number of ships in operation, 1322–1360

Total number of ships	4,299
Ships from south	2,231
Ships from north	2,009
Total number of mariners	96,276
Mariners from south	38,688
Mariners from north	35,824
Total number of English and Welsh Ports	195
Foreign Ports (including Irish)	14

Note: The difference between numbers of mariners from the two admiralties and the overall total is because only the known number of mariners has been included. What affects the overall total is the 30,000 mariners that are estimated to have served in the Scottish campaigns, but where it is possible we can say that 8,138 mariners operated ships from the northern ports, while 6,116 manned vessels from the southern ports during the Scottish wars. The main issue with the Scottish ships lies with the 1333 expedition, and the victual ships, which are rarely given crew sizes. In addition the details for the numbers of mariners contain information relating to the diplomatic and seneschal fleets, noted in Table 3.3. Therefore, only the crew sizes, which the sources provide, are listed in the two mariners' sections of the table, while the overall number includes the estimation of the missing crews. There are fifty-nine foreign ships that served from 1320 to 1360. The table includes the data from the 1346 fleet, even though these cannot be compared with any source. The inclusion of these 'un-comparable ships' aims to show what the potential maximum number of ships was that served in both Scotland and France. In addition, there are more ships that can than be placed into a specific admiralty that cannot have the three identifiers applied to them. For example, some ships that served in the 1333 Scottish campaign have one identifier missing but can nonetheless be placed into an admiralty; these have been included in the table.

London which freighted a total of 286 tuns and 92 pipes of wine: and E122/57/10 details 191 ships which freighted 743 sacks of wool and 456 tuns, 12 pipes of wine out of Hull in one year. As such it is difficult to calculate the sizes of ships from the majority of the custom accounts. See also W. R. Childs, *The custom accounts of Hull, 1453–1490* (Leeds, 1986), p. xxi.

Table 4.2 Total number of individual english ships in operation, 1322–1360

Known individual ships	4,065
Southern vessels	2,142
Northern vessels	1,923

Note: In total 188 masters served more than once in the service of the crown. Of these 188 men, forty-four served more than twice. In total these men accounted for 478 separate voyages from 1322 to 1359. However, only 303 individual ships were used for these 478 voyages because 175 of the ships were used on more than one occasion. For example, a particular master might have participated in five expeditions, but only operated three different ships over these five campaigns. Thus although in Table 4.1 these vessels would be counted five times in Table 4.2 they are only counted three times. Therefore, the table has deducted these 'double-counted' vessels from the previous figures given in Table 4.1. As such there are 175 ships (or rather voyages) in Table 4.1 that have not been included in Table 4.2. Eighty-nine of these extra voyages were carried out by ships from the southern admiralty. But the table still includes those ships that are 'un-comparable', such as the 1346 Crécy fleet. Finally, it is likely that over 100 ships that sailed in 1342 did so in more than one fleet. Table 4.2 does not take account of these because of the nature of the evidence on the earl of Northampton's fleet (in that we have no details for 145 vessels that transported the earl).

As noted above, Table 4.1 lists the overall number of vessels that served throughout the Scottish and French wars, whereas Table 4.2 records the number of individual ships that actually served between 1320 and 1360 in naval operations. But there are slight problems with this figure. For example, the 747 ships that served as transport vessels in 1346 have been included even though we cannot compare these to any other ships because they are recorded in the sources without the names of the masters that operated them. In addition, there are other ships that cannot be compared using the following methodology, such as the thirteen vessels that transported Ralph Stafford to Gascony in 1345.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, it is important to include these 'un-comparable' ships because to exclude them completely would certainly lead to a gross underestimation of the contribution of the English merchant fleet to the maritime war during this period. The methodology used to determine unique ships involves matching three identifiers of information (port name, ship name, master's name) that the sources consistently provide. If the master of the same ship, from the same port can be seen serving in more than one fleet during 1320–60, for the purposes of Table 4.2 the vessel is only counted as one ship and not several. Of course, this methodology could still suffer from issues relating to double counting and conflation. Consequently, Appendix 2 below provides more detail on the strengths and weaknesses of this approach. Consultation of Appendix 2, coupled with the figures given in Table 4.2, shows that it would be possible to argue that at any time the king had access to probably 2,000–3,000 ships throughout the kingdom. It has been argued previously that the southern admiralty usually produced twice as many ships as the north.⁵¹ However, a systematic survey of the available sources

⁵⁰ E101/25/3. This is because none of the vessels or their masters are named.

⁵¹ G. R. Cushman, 'The lord of the sea', p. 179.

does not hold this to be entirely correct. Nevertheless, if we take account of the 'missing' fleets of 1345, 1355 and 1359 the southern admiralty may have produced more ships. Even if they did, however, it is unlikely that in the period 1320–60 any southern admiralty port supplied more ships than ports such as Hull, King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth.⁵² Only the southern ports of Dartmouth and Winchelsea could compete with these three ports from the northern admiralty.

Table 4.2 shows that thousands of ships were engaged in military expeditions during this period. Yet, what the figure in this table represents is overall totals; what it fails to show is what proportion of a port's shipping resources it was likely to commit to the war effort in this period. This is an important consideration to take into account. For example, Great Yarmouth supplied the largest number of ships to the expeditions between 1320 and 1360. Yet other ports that provided fewer vessels may have actually contributed proportionally more of their maritime resources to the war effort, and as such may have suffered more than the larger ports. One way of addressing this issue is to take a sample using custom accounts from three ports to see how many home port ships sailed from that port in a year, and then compare the findings with the naval sources to see what proportion of their resources these ports were likely to have committed to the war effort.

The three ports that are analysed below are Great Yarmouth, Dover and Exeter. Exeter is the ideal place to begin the analysis owing to the exceptional survival of a detailed set of local port custom accounts. These documents not only record the international trade in commodities that were subject to national customs, such as wool and wine, but also include evidence for coastal trade that is invisible in the national custom accounts.⁵³ By examining the records that date from 1315 to 1321 it is possible to say that 311 ships docked in Exeter. A

⁵² Between 1320 and 1360 the three east coast ports of Hull, King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth contributed 17% of all the 4,065 individual ships that participated in the expeditions. This should not be seen as too remarkable because in the 1204 subsidy Hull contributed a total sum of £344 14s 4d, making it the most important port in the north-east, while the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk contained some of the richest tax villis in the kingdom and, along with the counties on the Welsh borders, had the greatest concentration of markets, thus making East Anglia a major centre for trade. Moreover, the east coast ports were also the dominant trading centres for the majority of England's wool and cloth trade during the fourteenth century. They continued to be the main centres of export and import for these commodities until the rise of London in the fifteenth century. See B. Waites, 'The medieval ports and trade of north-east Yorkshire', *MM* 63 (1977), pp. 137–49, p. 139; B. M. S. Campbell and K. Bartley, *England on the eve of the Black Death: an atlas of lay lordship, land and wealth, 1300–49* (Manchester, 2006), pp. 302, 306, 310–12, 324–35, 343; M. Bonney, 'The English medieval wool and cloth trade: new approaches for the local historian', *The Local Historian*, 22 (February, 1992), pp. 18–40, pp. 27–35.

⁵³ The best guide to the accounts are to be found in M. Kowaleski, *Local markets and regional trade in medieval Exeter* (Cambridge, 1995), and *idem*, *Local custom accounts of the port of Exeter, 1266–1321* (Exeter, 1993). It will be the latter book, which contains full transcriptions of the accounts, which will be used as the foundation for this ports contributions.

third (100) during this period were from Teignmouth, Exmouth or Exeter.⁵⁴ However, when we apply the three-identifier methodology used elsewhere in this book this number of ships can be reduced to seventy.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, this is still an average of fourteen ships per year. This number of ships represents only a fraction of the port's maritime resources because in the period 1302–20, 107 Exeter ships were listed in the local accounts, while nearly a quarter of all the 641 ships that docked in Exeter between 1266 and 1321 originated from that port.⁵⁶ Furthermore, the numbers of Exeter ships visible in the accounts is variable. For example, between 1316 and 1317 eighteen out of the forty-seven ships (38%) that were recorded through the accounts were Exeter vessels, compared with twenty-five of the seventy-one ships (35%) in 1319–20.

If we now turn to the navy accounts that relate to Exeter, Exmouth and Teignmouth we can see that the largest number of ships that these ports supplied to any one expedition were the sixteen vessels of 1342.⁵⁷ The custom accounts show us that between 1266 and 1321, a fifty-five year period, Exeter possessed some seventy-five individual ships. Compare this with evidence recorded in the naval sources between 1320 and 1360, a similar time period, and we can see that Exeter supplied eight-nine individual vessels to the naval operations during those years. So, accepting the limitations of the exercise, it would seem that over a considerable length of time Exeter was committing perhaps 20 to 30 per cent of its available shipping, rising to 50 per cent in 1342. This being said not all Exeter ships would be requisitioned owing to their small size (fishing boats for example), as such the impact might have been greater than these figures suggest.

In addition to these issues the Custom accounts are also notoriously difficult to use when trying to quantify the numbers of home port ships. For example, an examination of Great Yarmouth's accounts will only reveal those ships trading in that port. As such any Great Yarmouth vessel trading elsewhere will be included in another port's accounts.⁵⁸ Unfortunately, the huge task of collating all the existing custom accounts in a database, so that the overall shipping capacity of a particular port would be revealed in its entirety, is beyond the scope of this present book. Nevertheless some remarks can be given on the topic. For example, between 1320 and 1321 of the thirty ships visible in the custom records relating to Great Yarmouth half were from other ports, while in the period 1321 to 1322

⁵⁴ In the naval accounts these latter two ports are usually connected to Exeter and as such it is impossible to distinguish these from the accounts.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 130–201.

⁵⁶ M. Kowaleski, *Local markets*, table 6.3, p. 240 and *idem*, *Local custom accounts*, table 1, pp. 14–16. Kowaleski states that of the 641 vessels that were recorded only 302 were individual.

⁵⁷ E36/204, p. 238.

⁵⁸ For the difficulties of using the custom accounts, see M. M. Postan, *Medieval trade and finance*, pp. 355–56; M. Rorke, 'English and Scottish overseas trade, 1300–1600', *EcHR*, 49 (2006), pp. 265–288, pp. 266–67.

only three ships out of eleven were from other ports.⁵⁹ But these figures do not reveal the true capacity of Great Yarmouth's shipping. From 16 April 1323 to 1 February 1325 of the 116 ships that visited Boston 15 per cent were from Great Yarmouth.⁶⁰ Moreover, in the period 1320–21, 4 per cent of the ships docking in Exeter were from Great Yarmouth.⁶¹ Indeed, the men of Great Yarmouth themselves stated that they had ninety great ships in this period and sixty-five of these were engaged in the wine trade at Bordeaux.⁶² In fact a comparison with consecutive transport fleets containing ships from Great Yarmouth shows that it is likely that this port had at least 150 ships available at any one time. For example, only three ships out of the sixty-one vessels that participated in the 1338 transport fleet had sailed in the previous flotilla of 1337 when twenty Great Yarmouth ships transported the bishop of Lincoln to the Low Countries.⁶³ As such, if we were to say that between 1320 and 1325 Great Yarmouth had access to 150 ships at any one time, and the most they contributed to a single campaign was the sixty-one vessels they supplied in 1338, it could be said that at the most this port supplied 40 per cent of its available shipping to one campaign.⁶⁴

A similar comparison between Sandwich and Dover also shows the problems of accounting for the movements of shipping. From 1320 to 1323 thirty-eight ships were recorded through the Sandwich customs, yet thirteen (34%) of these were Dover ships, while only three were home port vessels.⁶⁵ Taken further, Dover supplied thirty-one ships for naval and transportation purposes between 1320 and 1360 and the most they contributed to any one campaign was nineteen ships in 1342.⁶⁶ Consequently, are we to assume that in 1342 Dover committed all its available resources to the war effort? It is probable that it did not, and while Edward's officers were arresting ships many of Dover's vessels were either at sea or trading in other ports. Indeed, what this short discussion reveals is that ships

⁵⁹ E122/148/23; E122/148/24; E122/148/25.

⁶⁰ E122/6/16; E122/6/17; E122/6/18.

⁶¹ M. Kowaleski, *Local customs*, pp. 186–201.

⁶² A. Saul, 'Great Yarmouth', p. 108.

⁶³ E101/20/16; *Norwell*, pp. 379–82.

⁶⁴ For the 1342 expedition Great Yarmouth supplied thirty-three ships, while at the siege of Calais it contributed fourteen; it supplied fifty-four ships in 1359. In all it would seem fairly conclusive that Great Yarmouth had at least 150 ships regularly in, or around, its port that the requisition officials could access. Indeed, we should consider the fact that if as many as sixty-five ships were involved in continental trade then many of Great Yarmouth's vessels would not be in their home port at times of requisition. For Great Yarmouth's naval service, see: E101/16/40; E101/18/3; E101/19/2; E101/19/6; E101/20/1; E101/20/4; E101/20/16; E101/21/4; E101/21/10; E101/22/25; E101/25/9; E101/25/24, nos. 17–30; E101/26/38; E101/27/22; E101/27/25; C47/2/25, no. 15; C47/2/35; BL, Add MS 7967, fols 96r, 98r, 98v; BL, Stowe MS 553, fols 77r, 77v; E372/179, m. 44; *Norwell*, pp. 379–82; E36/204, pp. 234–35, 240; CCR 1321–24, p. 90; CCR, 1339–41, p. 143; CCR, 1343–46, pp. 12–32; CPR, 1327–30, pp. 10, 104.

⁶⁵ E122/124/24; E122/124/25.

⁶⁶ For Dover's involvement in the maritime expeditions, see E101/16/34, no. 17; E101/19/22, m. 3v; E101/19/38, m. 7; E101/19/39, m. 3; E36/204, p. 225.

were rarely recorded through their home port's custom accounts and that in any evaluation of a port's shipping resources we should take account of the numerous 'invisible' ships that participated in coastal trade and the trade in non-customable commodities.⁶⁷ Nevertheless, what the figures also reveal is that ports like Exeter, which supplied eighty-nine individual ships to the wars between 1320 and 1360, were on average contributing perhaps 25 to 40 per cent of their available shipping to any one expedition.⁶⁸ Thus, although Great Yarmouth supplied the largest number of ships to the campaigns, it was nevertheless providing only the same number of vessel in proportion to its wealth and shipping resources as smaller ports.

The movement of shipping from port to port, and the likelihood that vessels were requisitioned away from home, whilst loading or discharging cargo, or else looking for freight, raises the question of disruption to trade caused by the war effort. At this point it must be kept in mind that the sources are not complete enough to calculate the shipment of goods from one port to another for the reason that after the national custom had been paid any coastal trading enterprise, apart from the odd exceptions, is generally unavailable. As such we are rarely left with detailed comparative material. This latter point would be crucial if, like Exeter, the majority of trade carried out by English ports was coastal. Nevertheless, if ten ships from one port were requisitioned whilst trading in another town would this arrest result in loss of revenue for the shipowner and those merchants who had cargo to deliver or pick up? In the custom accounts relating to Sandwich we have already seen how thirteen Dover vessels were present at Sandwich between 1320 and 1323. If they were arrested in Sandwich what would be the likely financial result of the loss of trade? That such cases happened is made clear by the evidence pertaining to the 1342 Brittany campaign. In 1342 the sources show

⁶⁷ See, for example, M. Kowaleski, *Local markets*, Chapter 6, which shows that 70% of Exeter's trade was coastal. Although Kowaleski does suggest that Exeter may have been unusual in this regard due to its large hinterland she does nonetheless say that such figures for coastal trade have implications for other port towns (pp. 5, 33); R. H. Britnell, *Growth and Decline in Colchester, 1300–1525* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 70, who argues that most of Hythe's trade was coastal. W. R. Childs, 'Devon's overseas trade', p. 84 suggests that Dartmouth and Plymouth may have been heavily involved in coastal trade. Finally a large proportion of trade carried on through Norwich and other East Anglian ports was probably coastal, see P. Dunn, 'After the Black Death', pp. 3, 196–258; M. Rorke, 'English and Scottish overseas trade', pp. 267–68 who notes that 'not all exports were customable, and the records make it difficult, if not impossible, to discern certain trades.' This is also a possible explanation as to why it is assumed that the majority of the export trade in England was in the hands of foreign merchants, when it is in fact more likely that these individuals were recorded in the accounts of a particular port rather than that port's own merchants, who were in fact trading elsewhere, and as such recorded through other towns' custom records. On the dominance of foreign merchants, see N. S. B. Gras, *The early English customs system* (Cambridge, 1918), pp. 110–11.

⁶⁸ Exeter's naval contribution is recorded on, E101/17/3 m. 6b; E101/17/24 m. 4; E101/17/35; E101/19/16, mm. 3, 4, 6; E101/1938, m. 3; E101/19/39, m. 2; E101/25/9; E101/27/24, m. 1; E372/179, m. 43; E372/187, m. 43; BL, Add MS 7967, fol. 97v; Norwell, p. 371; E36/204, p. 238.

that early in the requisition process eighteen ships from Dover were mistakenly recorded as coming from Sandwich.⁶⁹ Only when the final accounts were prepared was this mistake rectified. From the point of view of this discussion, however, that eighteen ships from Dover were arrested while visiting Sandwich could have unduly affected that port's trade in a variety of ways. It is difficult to know how large these vessels were and what cargo they would have carried. This being so if we consider that these ships could have freighted nearly 1,000 lasts of herring, or 1,500 tuns of wine, we can see the possible effects that ship requisition could have on a port's trading enterprise.⁷⁰ Indeed, similar loss of trade is highlighted by examining other ports. On 22 October 1377, two ships from King's Lynn exported from Boston 192 sacks of wool, sixty-eight cloves of wool and ninety-four sarplars of wool, raising the spectre of significant lost earnings. In custom alone these two cargos were worth £511 9d.⁷¹

Accepting that it is certain that it happened, and that evidence is uneven, vessels that were arrested away from their home ports were likely to be found in nearer rather than distant ports. In 1327 out of thirty-one ships that were arrested in Devonshire only three were from ports outside of that county. The closest port that a ship came from that was outside Devon was Lyme Regis in Dorset, while the vessel that was arrested furthest away from its home port was the *Mariote* of Drogheda commanded by James de Cuningham.⁷² Moreover, as far as we can tell, there is no indication that the farther away from its home port a ship was when requisitioned the larger it would be because the *Mariote* was recorded as a ship of 50 tuns, which is not overly large for the period. The major problem, however, of understanding this issue is that even if a ship was arrested at another port, in the final documentation that was submitted at the Exchequer it would be listed under its home port rather than the port of arrest.

Yet a cautionary note needs to be struck in relation to the effect of ship requisition on the conduct of trade, for it is likely that in the majority of cases when a ship was arrested it was given plenty of time to make its intended journey. In Chapter 1 it was shown that when a vessel was requisitioned the crew were given an up-front payment in order to guarantee their appearance at the port of embarkation. In all cases the date of the muster was usually at least two to six months after the ship's arrest, and with rare exceptions, it would seem

⁶⁹ E36/204, p. 225; C47/2/35, m. 2. See, Chapter 1 above for a discussion on this.

⁷⁰ The 1,000 lasts of herrings or the 1,500 tuns of wine are taken from two ships that freighted such goods from Exeter in 1310/11. They have merely been chosen to highlight the possible amounts of goods freighted by ships, see M. Kowaleski, *Local custom accounts*, pp. 118, 119.

⁷¹ S. H. Rigby, ed. *The overseas trade of Boston in the reign of Richard II* (Woodbridge, 2005), pp. 11, 12. A clove was a measure of wool that weighed seven pounds, whilst a sack of wool weighed 364 pounds or the fleeces of roughly 260 sheep, see M. Kowaleski, *The hanever's accounts of the earldom and duchy of Cornwall, 1287–1356* (Exeter, 2001), pp. 324, 326.

⁷² E101/17/35.

that, the ship's crew would be given plenty of time to complete their trading voyage. Indeed, if the master was not the owner, or had no shares in the vessel, he may have found the notion of gaining an up-front payment from a king's clerk an attractive offer. In fact the success of the requisitioning procedure can be partly explained by suggesting that in some cases the shipowner was forced into providing his ship for a payment his crew received while trading in another port. Although in this period a shipmaster could be the owner of a vessel, or could have shares in the ship he commanded, it was increasingly the case that during the fourteenth century shipmasters were becoming hired hands who usually had no commercial connection with the vessel they commanded. In short, because in some cases the crew had no stake in the cargo they were freighting, payment by the crown did not result in any loss to them and the crew may have been eager to enlist the ship.⁷³

Another important issue relating to the effects that requisition would have had on the economy of local ports concerns the time of year when ships were arrested. This is an important issue because in this period shipowners never challenged the king's right to requisition ships; rather their complaints concerned the length of time they remained under arrest.⁷⁴ It was the case that the preparation for most of the fleets that sailed in the fourteenth century began in the months of April, May and June, with the expectation that they would transport the army in July.⁷⁵ When it is considered that a third (32%) of all the voyages that transported goods shipped by Norwich merchants in the period 1377 to 1399 were undertaken in the months of June, July and August it is understandable why shipowners and merchants vented frustration at the requisition process.⁷⁶

The crown must have been aware of these issues and the requisition process was in part designed to minimise as much as possible the effects of these problems by sending clerks out to meet with shipowners in the months preceding a campaign. This was done so that the king would know how many ships were available for requisition.⁷⁷ However, this also allowed the shipowners to know when a vessel was likely to be requisitioned, whilst also allowing them to choose which ships should be supplied to the crown. This gave them the opportunity to discuss amongst themselves the best way of meeting the demands of the king. This meant they would be able to place local concerns at the heart of these discussions. It may be that merchants choose for requisition vessels that were owned by only one person and they offered compensation to the owner for providing this ship. Alternatively a ship owned by several people may be offered because the burden, or rather costs, of requisition were spread across several individuals. Moreover, because charter-parties were likely to be agreed in advance, knowledge

⁷³ R. Ward, *The world of the medieval shipmaster*, Chapter 3.

⁷⁴ J. Sherborne, 'The English Navy', p. 165.

⁷⁵ See above Chapter 3.

⁷⁶ P. Dunn, 'After the Black Death', Table 3, p. 198.

⁷⁷ See Chapter 1 pp. 19–25.

of when a ship was going to be in the service of the king meant that vessels were not hired out to merchants at times when they would not be available. In short, the consultations between the crown and shipowners would allow the latter to have some form of control over which ships were arrested, and at the same time they would know not to conclude hire agreements during these periods. Knowledge of the time when a campaign was to be launched would also allow merchants to plan ahead for the difficulties that may occur due to lack of carrying capacity. Although this would not avoid the disruption to trade that requisitioning undoubtedly had, it at least shows that the process was managed so that as least confusion as possible would be created. Consequently, in the period 1324–60 although ship requisition undoubtedly affected a port's trading capacity a well-managed and careful process would seek to limit this.

It is undeniable, however, that as the war progressed requisition must have had an impact on a port's trade. In the 1370s the Commons in parliament stated on numerous occasions that the requisition of ships had a negative impact on trade and shipping.⁷⁸ In 1382, and probably in response to these complaints, Richard II enrolled a statute forbidding shipment of denizen goods in foreign ships.⁷⁹ What effect such measures had is difficult to say. In assessing these claims, however, we have to take account of the possibility that the Commons was conflating several issues. For example, since 1348 England had not only been at war but also suffered the effects of the Black Death. Moreover, it is known that in the period 1340–60 the export of wool underwent large fluctuations in prices and volume of exports.⁸⁰ Of course some of this was offset by the rise in English cloth exports, but in the second half of the fourteenth century the Bordeaux wine trade also collapsed.⁸¹ In addition we have to take account of the various schemes that the crown implemented in the period 1338–53 in order to control various aspects of the wool trade, and through this taxation. It is also worth bearing in mind that, on occasions, contemporaries could fail to see the connection between economics, warfare and politics as well as modern governments. The reform of the wool trade implemented in the 1350s by William Edington produced some remarkable results in terms of profits for the crown, but while contemporaries saw this as good government planning this success owed more to the general improvements in European trade.⁸² It is worthy of note that between 1324 and 1359, the period which saw the greatest burdens placed on the merchant fleet, the merchants in parliament rarely complained about the effects of requisition. Indeed, in the vast majority of cases grievances usually centred on the oppressive

⁷⁸ See, for example, *RP* V, pp 260–61.

⁷⁹ D. Hughes, *Illustrations of Chaucer's England*, p. 134.

⁸⁰ S. L. Waugh, *England in the reign of Edward III* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 58–75.

⁸¹ R. W. Unger, 'The tonnage of Europe's merchant fleets', p. 255.

⁸² W. M. Ormrod, 'The English crown and the customs', *EHR* 40 (1981), pp. 21–40.

nature of the commissioners of array and other land related military services.⁸³ This suggests that it was not until after the resumption of war in 1369–70 that the merchants began to complain about ship requisition. In short the reasons for a possible reduction in shipping in the 1370s are more complex than the complaints about requisition mentioned by the Commons.

It is within this complex jigsaw of shipping resources and requisition that we need to take account of the figures presented in Table 4.1 and Table 4.2. Although the numbers of vessels recorded in these tables may seem large it is argued here that the maritime resources of England have hitherto been seriously underestimated. In part this is because previous research has generally relied on the evidence gained from examining the national custom accounts. Yet it has been shown above that in cases such as Exeter the vast majority of a port's trade could be coastal and thus invisible to the national customs. That English merchants found it easier to employ foreign ships to take their merchandise to the continent should come as no surprise because by doing so they automatically eliminated all the risks of losing their vessels to piracy or acts of aggression. This does not mean, however, that they did not own ships, only that they chose to use them in the re-export trade. Indeed, the large numbers of ships engaged in this enterprise should not be underestimated and there was a flourishing inshore trade network between regional capitals and the 'galaxies of minute neighbouring creeks and havens'.⁸⁴ Even more important was the trade between regional head ports such as Hull and Newcastle. The fact that this trade is largely hidden does not detract from its potential size. This is borne out by the rare survivals of local port customs accounts, such as those of Exeter, and petitions from merchants. The evidence revealed in such documents provides clues to the complexities of trade in this period and shows that the national custom accounts may be a flawed source for estimating the size of the English merchant fleet. For example, in the mid fourteenth century a group of five merchants, two from England and three from Bordeaux, freighted a cargo of wine in the ship *Gracedieu*. This ship was from London and commanded by one William atte Ponde. While this ship was transporting its cargo of wine from Bordeaux to La Crottoy it called into the port of Eastbourne in Sussex to pick up an English pilot who would sail the ship from Eastbourne to northern France.⁸⁵ As such because the ship never unloaded its cargo in England it is possible that it escaped paying any custom. Indeed, many English ship owners were exempt from import charges, and as such their vessels are sometimes invisible to us in the sources.⁸⁶ Another intriguing piece

⁸³ RP IV, p. 393.

⁸⁴ G. V. Scammell, 'English merchant shipping', p. 329.

⁸⁵ SC8/168/8385.

⁸⁶ See, for example, H. Clarke, 'The archaeology, history and architecture of the medieval ports of the east coast of England, with special reference to King's Lynn, Norfolk', in *The archaeology of medieval ships and harbours in northern Europe: papers based on those who*

of evidence relates to a petition of Nicholas Pyk. In the 1330s Pyk sent one of his wine ships from Bordeaux to Normandy. Unfortunately this ship was forced into Southampton by a storm where it was arrested for the king's service. The result of this was that Pyk had to unload his wine in Southampton and re-ship it to Normandy in another vessel.⁸⁷ Nicholas Pyk was an influential English merchant and shipowner and what this shows is that many English merchants were involved in a complex network of trade routes that on occasions did not involve landing, or planning to land, cargo in England.⁸⁸ As such there were certainly English ships freighting numerous cargoes that escaped the clutches of the custom collectors by virtue of the nature of their business.

What the above evidence highlights is that in fourteenth-century England there existed a trade network that to us is 'invisible' in the surviving sources. We know this trade existed because of the huge size of the supply and transport fleets that were raised. It is likely that the king found the vessels for these armadas from among the large numbers of coastal trading vessels that existed at this time. Evidence of this is easier to see in the Tudor period when such trade became subject to customs, revealing a large a vibrant trade between ports such as Berwick, Newcastle, Hull, Great Yarmouth and London.⁸⁹ As one commentator on this trade noted, 'even more remarkable and more eloquent as to the thriving state of English shipping are the figures for coastal traffic which are available from the mid-sixteenth century. How and when this native predominance was established it is impossible to say.'⁹⁰ It is argued here that this predominance already existed in the fourteenth century and the evidence for this is the large supply and transport fleets that were raised during this period. Commentators who have underestimated the size of the English merchant fleet are wont to stress its limitations because they have usually relied on previous studies based on the national customs that show that English trade was dominated by foreign shipowners. By doing so they have ignored the military naval sources and evidence from the surviving local port customs; both point to the need for a critical revaluation of this belief. Indeed, in 1372 English merchants themselves stated that in the period 1330–50 English shipping was 'noble and plentiful in all ports.'⁹¹

presented at an international symposium on boat and ship archaeology at Bremerhaven in 1997, ed. S. McGrail, BAR international series 66 (Greenwich, 1979), pp. 155–66.

⁸⁷ SC8/168/8385.

⁸⁸ Pyk was involved in requisitioning ships for the 1338–40 campaigns. His role in maritime affairs was not always honourable and in 1342 several of his ships were involved in the 'Taryte' affair, although it is unlikely that Pyk directly took part in this incident. He was also influential within the merchant community of London. See, E101/20/39; CCR, 1341–43, p. 529; E40/1719.

⁸⁹ G. V. Scammell, 'English merchant shipping', p. 329.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 337.

⁹¹ RP V, p. 260.

In conclusion, although over a 40-year period the ports examined above contributed hundreds of ships to the expeditions, it is likely that this should be seen as 20 to 40 per cent of their available resources. Moreover, it is also clear that ships were rarely sat in their home ports for long periods, a problem that must have affected ship requisition.⁹² As such it is argued here that officials who arrested ships for the crown were probably recording no more than the vessels that the local bailiffs, or town dignitaries, had allocated for such purposes, which amounted to a fair proportion of the port's available shipping resources.⁹³ Indeed, considering the fact that bailiffs of sea ports were, on occasions, actively involved in ship requisition it is likely that they acted favourably towards their fellow shipowners and that they also placed local considerations above that of national ones.⁹⁴ This would have reduced friction between the king and his subjects, but would also have made the arresting officials' work easier owing to the fact that many of that port's ships would simply not be docked waiting to be requisitioned, as most vessels would not spend long periods idle in port. This point is of major significance because it shows that rather than possessing 'no strategic imagination and for years consistently failing to appreciate sea power' Edward III and his ministers had a sound maritime policy based on how they used the resources available to them.⁹⁵ In short they ensured that they did not create a situation in which they denuded every port of its shipping. Finally, that ships' crews were given ample time from arrest to appearance at muster suggests that the owners of the vessels could allow for such loss of commercial activity.

⁹² This point also explains the apparent differences between the two documents relating to the Brittany campaigns (C47/2/35 and E36/204). It will be remembered from the above discussion in Chapter 1 that several ships were recorded as originating from Sandwich in the former account, while in the latter source their home ports had been altered to Dover. As we can see above Dover's ships were by far the most frequent visitors to the port of Sandwich, a fact that could complicate the requisition process. This section in no way reinforces the idea that because many ships were at sea, or in other ports, that the crown would find it difficult to requisition a sufficient number of vessels from a particular port. It has been suggested that if many ships were at sea this would severely reduce the availability of vessels for use by the crown (J. S. Kepler, 'Naval impressment', p. 73). This view, however, underestimates the size of the English merchant marine. In addition, this argument also assumes that the clerks would arrest every single ship they could within any port they visited. Such actions would create political problems for the king and would increase hostility to future ship requisition.

⁹³ This point is emphasised even more when it is remembered that arrest orders were issued weeks before the crown's officials would be able to directly visit a port, thus giving the port's officials plenty of time to organise a proportional contribution of ships to the war effort.

⁹⁴ For bailiffs involvement in ship requisition, see G. R. Cushway, 'The lord of the sea', p. 158.

⁹⁵ For the comment that Edward did not understand sea power, see D. Loades, *England's maritime empire*, p. 3.

Shipmaster Service and Mariners

The overall total of 96,276 mariners involved in the operations of the period is obviously an overestimation.⁹⁶ Unfortunately, the sources make it impossible to offer a more accurate figure. For example, Great Yarmouth contributed 347 ships to the king's wars in this period and 8,851 mariners manned these vessels. This total, which is more than twice the pre-Black Death population of the town, must conceal a great deal of repeat service.⁹⁷ However, what is surprising is that in one fleet in 1342 Great Yarmouth supplied thirty-three ships manned by 924 mariners, which means that in one expedition, at the same point in time, a quarter of all Great Yarmouth's population appears to have sailed on board the town's ships.⁹⁸ This is an interesting point, suggesting that either that the town's population was totally wedded to service at sea, or that manpower for the fleets was raised not just from the town but also from the outlying villages and surrounding areas. More likely, however, is that during the preparations for a campaign mariners were arrested through commissions of array alongside the general levies from the areas of the coast designated 'maritime lands' by the crown.⁹⁹ This would not have impeded a ship's progress at sea because not all men on board a vessel would have to be experienced seamen. A ship with a single mast only required a small group of skilled mariners who could direct the other crew members to do the work. Thus, what the commissions of array provided is the brute force needed to handle the tackle on board a ship.¹⁰⁰ In relation to the commissions of array having access to manpower from a port's hinterland it is worth bearing in mind that Great Yarmouth was in fairly close proximity to Norwich, a town with an estimated population of 18,000–25,000.¹⁰¹ Moreover,

⁹⁶ The total numbers of mariners recorded in Table 4.1 are calculated by adding together all the ships' crews for which data exists. Included are estimations of mariner numbers for the campaigns where we have no such information: for example 1333, for which we have no accurate crew sizes.

⁹⁷ A. Saul, 'Great Yarmouth and the hundred years war', p. 105 estimates the population before the plague to be 4,500. However, Saul does make the suggestion that the town could have had a population of anywhere up to 10,000 before the Black Death, see A. Saul, 'English towns in the middle ages', *JMH*, 8 (1982), pp. 75–88.

⁹⁸ E36/204, pp. 234, 235, 240; C47/2/35; CCR, 1343–46, pp. 128–32.

⁹⁹ M. Hughes, 'The fourteenth century French raids on Hampshire and the Isle of Wight' in *Arms, armies and fortifications in the hundred years war*, ed. A. Curry, M. Hughes, pp. 121–43, p. 140 states that the 'maritime land' extended six leagues from the shore.

¹⁰⁰ Alternatively the mariners for the ships could be gathered from the surrounding area of the embarkation port, such as seems to have happened during the weeks leading up to the St Sardos campaign. It is known that admirals did sometimes work alongside commissioners of array during the preparations of a campaign and so it is possible that men were arrested for service during the general round up of county levies. On the admirals working alongside commissioners of array, see R. M. Hedley, 'The administration of the navy', pp. 20–33.

¹⁰¹ P. Dunn, 'After the Black Death', pp. 27–30.

in the 1330s Norwich had undergone large scale migration from the rural hinterland into the city, which provides evidence that communities in this period were not static. Finally, many Norwich merchants chose to use Great Yarmouth as the port from which to ship their goods.¹⁰² As such it is not going too far to argue that in this period Norfolk had a mobile population that in parts was quite demographically dense.

It is beyond doubt, therefore, that there is a high proportion of repeat service among the mariner group. Taking this into account perhaps only half the numbers of seafarers recorded in Table 4.1 were in fact individuals. But again, it is worth bearing in mind that there are probably as many as 1,000 ships missing from the extant source evidence. However, we can be more precise in our conclusions concerning the masters. Of the 3,051 masters we know by name, 188 commanded vessels over more than one expedition.¹⁰³ What this seems to suggest is that the merchant fleet in the fourteenth century was of a significant size, for otherwise we would expect to find a higher rate of repeat service.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, pp. 193–202.

¹⁰³ This number is calculated from Table 4.1. The apparent discrepancy between the total number of masters here and the overall total of ships given in Table 4.2 is because there are many occasions when a master might appear with a particular named ship, but where the name of the port is not provided by the source, so we can name more masters than we can ships. The masters we can not name are from the 747 ships that sailed in the 1346 fleet who cannot be named, neither can 117 from 1342, and there are further 106 ships where the master's name is not recorded. This is calculated by matching the three identifiers discussed earlier. Although these masters served more than once this does not necessarily mean they operated different ships and many commanded the same vessel on more than one occasion. For example, Peter Seaman commanded the *Katerine* on four separate occasions in 1336, 1337, 1338 and 1342. See E101/19/38, m. 3; Norwell, p. 368; E36/204, p. 233. That many masters are unidentifiable is due to the Crécy fleet sources, the absences from the fleet that transported the earl of Northampton to Brittany in 1342, and those ships that are named in the Scottish wars with no master. In addition, there are other payrolls, such as the Black Prince's 1355 transport fleet, which are damaged: CCR, 1318–23, p. 660; CPR, 1321–24, p. 114; CPR, 1327–30; CPR, 1334–38, pp. 98; CCR, 1343–46, pp. 128–32; BL, Add MS 7976, fols 94r–99v; BL, Stowe MS 553, fols 76v, 77v; BL, Add MS 7967, fols 98r, 99v; BL, Cotton MS, Nero C.VIII, fols 262v, 264r, 265v, 266r, 266v E101/15/36; E101/16/7, m. 11; E101/16/16, m. 6; E101/16/34, no. 17; E101/16/40, roll 1, main roll; E101/17/3, mm. 2, 6d, 7, 8; E101/17/10, m. 1; E101/17/24, m. 4, 4d; E101/17/35; E101/18/3; E101/18/28, m. 2; E101/18/31, m. 1; E101/18/35; E101/18/36; E101/19/3, m. 8; E101/19/4, mm. 4, 5, 7; E101/19/6, m. 1–4, 2d; E101/19/22, mm. 2, 6d; E101/19/28, m. 3; E101/19/32; E101/19/38, mm. 2, 3, 7; E101/19/39, m. 3; E101/20/6; E101/21/7, m. 3; E101/21/10, mm. 2, 3; E101/21/13, m. 3; E101/23/22; E101/25/9; E101/25/24, no. 32; E101/26/38; E101/27/15, m. 2; E101/27/22, mm. 2, 3, 4; E101/27/24; E101/27/25, m. 2; C47/2/25, no. 15; C47/2/30, mm. 1d, 2d; C47/2/35; E101/20/4, m. 7; Rot. Scot. I, pp. 523, 586.

¹⁰⁴ This small number of repeat servers was in many ways mirrored by the service records of the men-at-arms. A recent examination of the Falkirk campaign of 1298 showed that at the time of that campaign many were 'relative novices in war' and that, on average, it was usual for knights to participate in royal-led expeditions 4.79 times in their whole career in arms, see D. Simpkin, *The English aristocracy at war*, tables 3.1–3.4, pp. 84–90.

Although we cannot be certain how much repetition of service there was in the overall mariner numbers, we can, nonetheless, make firm conclusions by examining the naval careers of some individual masters. Walter atte Lane from Weymouth served on six separate occasions between 1322 and 1338. He operated the *Richgayne* in 1322, when that ship was part of the supply fleet for the Scottish campaign of that year, before commanding the same ship in the transport flotilla that conveyed the earl of Surrey to Gascony in 1325. In 1326 he was employed as master of the *Richegayne* for the last time when that ship was part of the armada that was raised to protect the coast from the threatened invasion of Roger Mortimer and Queen Isabella. He then escaped service for ten years before reappearing as the master of the *Cristiane* in 1337. His final period of service came in 1338 when he again commanded the *Cristiane*.¹⁰⁵ John le Longe of King's Lynn served through four campaigns as master of four different ships. He began his service in the king's wars in 1324 as master of the *Wisest* before going on to serve in 1333 as commander of the *Mariole* during Edward III's siege of Berwick. Two years later he commanded the *Peter* in Edward III's largest Scottish campaign. Longe made his final appearance in 1347 at the siege of Calais as master of the *Seintemarieship*. Consequently, through his naval career Longe participated in two notable sieges that involved combined land and maritime operations. Yet John's career was not without blemish and in 1340 although the ship he was commanding (the *Seintemarieship*) had been requisitioned John failed to appear at the port of embarkation.¹⁰⁶ Robert Tynwhit of Great Yarmouth also had an active naval career.¹⁰⁷ He participated in four campaigns including the battle of Sluys in 1340 and the siege of Calais in 1347. Consequently, within seven years Tynwhit experienced a hard-fought battle at sea and took part in the largest military expedition ever launched in the fourteenth century. The mariner William Fille of Great Yarmouth served five times in the wars of the period. He first appears as master of the *Margrete* a vessel that participated in the diplomatic flotilla that transported the bishop of Lincoln to Dortrecht in 1337. In the following year he participated in the Low Countries army transport fleet as master of the *Cog John*. In that same year he returned to Flanders as commander of the same ship with a cargo of wool. In 1340 he fought at the battle of Sluys as master of the *Margrete*, before going on to command the *Beton*, a vessel that transported part of the king's army to Brittany in 1342. His final period of service came in 1347 when he commanded the *James* during the siege of Calais.¹⁰⁸ This evidence reminds us that just as the knights, esquires and archers of Edward III's armies accumulated military experience during these decades, so too did shipmasters.

¹⁰⁵ CPR, 1321–24, p. 114; E101/17/3, m. 3; E101/17/24, m. 4; E101/19/38, m. 3; E101/19/39, m. 3.

¹⁰⁶ E101/18/28, m. 2; E101/18/31, m. 1; E101/19/3, m. 8; E101/25/24, no. 32; C47/2/30, m. 2d.

¹⁰⁷ C47/2/35; E101/21/10, m. 5; E101/22/25, m. 1; E101/25/24/, n. 23.

¹⁰⁸ E101/20/16; E101/21/10, m. 4; E101/22/25, m. 3; E36/204, p. 234; E101/25/24, no. 21.

Beyond the careers of individual shipmasters we are able to perceive familial groups within the port communities contributing their expertise to the Edwardian wars. William and Alan Littlebod of Canterbury, father and son, sailed their two ships, the *Mighel* and the *Peter*, to Scotland in 1322 to deliver victuals to Edward II's army.¹⁰⁹ Roger Hammond, from Romney, and his son, Roger Hammond junior, both sailed in the Brittany transport fleet of 1342.¹¹⁰ Four members of the Box family, Richard, Henry, Thomas and William, from Great Yarmouth, were active in 1338, 1342, 1347 and 1359. What is also interesting is that none of the Box family commanded the same ships, which implies they were hired hands rather than shipowners.¹¹¹

But two Exchequer accounts, one from 1337 and another dating from 1340, are perhaps the most intriguing documents that highlight familial relationships at sea. The first source records the names of forty men-at-arms, forty archers and fifty mariners that served onboard the *Gracedieu* of King's Lynn from 8 June 1337 to 15 August 1338.¹¹² This ship was put to sea to search for a Scottish pirate named William Hoth. However, an examination of the names of the mariners vividly illuminates the close relationships that could exist aboard vessels during this period. There is a John, Roger and William Davy amongst the crew, in addition to a Robert and John Cole and a William de Cokesford and a Geoffrey de Cokesford. Indeed seventeen (34%) members of the crew share a surname. A comparison with the men-at-arms reveals seven men with the same surname, while the archer group contains twenty-four men with the same surname. If we take the archers and men-at-arms into account it would not be going too far to suggest that this ship was almost a 'family at sea', with 53 per cent of the people aboard this vessel having some form of familial connection.

The second piece of evidence relates to the forty-five crew members aboard the *Godbefor* of King's Lynn.¹¹³ This source also shows that the crew were closely connected. The master of the vessel was John Halfknight but there was also a Thomas, William and Richard Halfknight aboard. Furthermore, John and Roger Reppes were also crew members as were Geoffrey Hormynglowe senior and John Hormynglowe junior.¹¹⁴ These are surely members of the same families and it shows that the master of the ship had three family members aboard, as well as two more family groups. This tantalising glimpse at two crew lists shows that mariners operating the ships of the period could be close relatives. This familiarity between members of the crew could be important particularly when we consider that the crew on board the *Godbefor* fought at Sluys. In micro-sociology such small groups that contain members familiar with each other have

¹⁰⁹ CPR, 1321–24, p. 109.

¹¹⁰ E36/204, p. 230.

¹¹¹ Norwell, p. 380; E36/204, p. 234; E101/25/24, no. 27; E101/27/22, m. 3.

¹¹² E101/20/28, mm. 1, iv records the names of the mariners.

¹¹³ E101/22/30, mm. 2, 2d records the names of the forty-five mariners.

¹¹⁴ Reppes is located in East Anglia, so it was in the same geographical area as King's Lynn.

been described as being 'special and more than the sum of its individual parts. It has, in particular, a social dynamic which is relatively independent of issues and locations', and that 'it is a requirement for the groups continued existence that there should be strongly held purposes'. This is called 'high morale'.¹¹⁵ This is an advantageous element to have within any military force, especially in the thick of a battle. Of course the evidence relating to the St Sardos expedition shows that, at least during the preparations for this campaign, mariners were added to the waiting ships while the vessels were away from their home ports.¹¹⁶ This could, therefore, have diluted the camaraderie aboard these ships as relatively stable crews suddenly had an influx of several new seamen. Yet, a slow trickle of one man here and another man there would not affect the close bonds aboard a ship, and it is likely that in their capacity as trading vessels, when the crown was not concerned about crew sizes, most ships' crews no doubt consisted of family members. In fact overall it is possible to see forty-six familial groupings in the sources of the period, and that is undoubtedly a minimum figure.¹¹⁷

This evidence of familial connections in port communities allows some elaboration as to what backgrounds shipmasters in this period may have come from. Although speculative in nature it is likely that many, like William Bacoun (see below), certainly came from families that were involved in the business of shipping, and because of this they were provided with a 'head start' on their contemporaries. Indeed, as the evidence above shows there were many instances of men with common surnames operating out of ports in this period. It is likely that as in the Tudor period men who owned vessels, or had part shares in ships, could

¹¹⁵ See P. E. Willis, *Learning to labour: how working class kids get working class jobs* (Farnham, 2000), p. 123 and especially pp. 119–126 in which Willis analyses the social psychology of the 'group'.

¹¹⁶ See, BL, Add MS 7967, fols 94r–99v.

¹¹⁷ The forty-six includes the family groups noted above that served on the two ships in 1337 and 1340, in addition to the Saundre family from Dartmouth; the Richard family from Brunham; the Bryan family from Southampton; the Swete family from Dartmouth; the Le Bakers from Dartmouth; the Waynflete and Loverick families from Great Yarmouth; the Nesbete family from Hartlepool; the Shipman family from Winchelsea; the Finch family from Winchelsea; the Scots from King's Lynn; the Sauger family from Sidmouth; the Godale family from Hook; the Goldyngs from Hastings; the Passelewe family from Winchelsea; the Folk family from Winchelsea; the Swan family from Winchelsea; the Baitille family from Winchelsea; the Hammond family from Romney, which was larger than just the two Rogers with also a John and Richard; the Barnet family from Seaford; the Campe family from Brightlingsea; the Pacche family from Brightlingsea; the Berwald family from Hull; the de la Pole family from Hull (these were not William and Richard but Ralph and Adam de la Pole who served in Brittany in 1342 and Gascony in 1347 respectively), see: BL, Add MS 7967, fols 94r, 94v, 95r, 96r, 99r, 99v; BL, Cotton MS, Nero C.VIII, fols 265r, 265v, 266r; E101/16/40, main roll; E101/17/3, m. 6; E101/17/24, m. 4d; E101/19/6, mm. 1, 3; E101/19/16, m. 4; E101/19/22, m. 1; E101/19/32; E101/19/38, m. 3; E101/19/39, m. 2; E101/21/7, m. 2; E101/21/10, m. 3; E101/25/9; E101/25/20, no. 13; E101/25/24, nos. 3, 37; Norwell, pp. 363–86; E36/204, pp. 222, 227, 228, 229, 234, 235; E101/27/25, mm. 1, 2; E101/27/33, m. 1; E372/179, m. 44; *Chronicon anonymi Cantuariensis*, pp. 60–61.

elevate their sons to positions aboard in the hope that they would forge a career in shipping. Alternatively a shipmaster who owned no part of a vessel may have had the opportunity of 'training' one of his sons, brothers, nephews or cousins by introducing this individual to the crew as a ships' boy or a mariner. Unfortunately it is difficult to go into further details, but if the occupations or classes that mariners were drawn from remained relatively stable from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries then it is likely that in this period seafarers were drawn from the cloth industry, woodcraft or other manual and trade crafts.¹¹⁸

The evidence from the naval sources also suggests that many shipmasters were part of a highly mobile workforce that operated out of several ports during their careers. Richard Priour, for example, operated out of no fewer than three east coast ports during this period. He commanded the *Magdelene* in 1338 and the *Gaynepay* of Ipswich in 1359. But he also sailed from the ports of Whitlowenes and Withernsea.¹¹⁹ Thomas le Clere sailed out of London, Ipswich and Orford as master of three different ships during his career.¹²⁰ While in 1345 and 1347 both Robert and Hugh Stote commanded the same ship, the *Seintemariécog*, on one occasion each but from the two ports of Newcastle and Hull.¹²¹ It seems likely that either the Stotes owned this vessel or the owner preferred to employ members from the same family. The Stotes, however, were not unusual in this regard and Lawrence and Walter atte Lane from Weymouth commanded the *Richegayne* in consecutive years in different fleets.¹²² An interesting case in this regard involved Ralph and Robert Goderich. In 1338 Robert took command of the *Mariot* in the port of Colchester and sailed this vessel from 17 June until 20 July. On 21 July Ralph took command of this same ship but in the port of Blackneye and continued to operate it until 2 August.¹²³ The crew size between these two 'change over's' also remained stable with only two mariners departing the vessel in Blackneye. The fact that mariners operated ships out of several ports during their careers may actually have been commonplace. Indeed, records relating to trade between Ireland and Bristol show that it was not unusual for shipmasters to move between towns during their careers.¹²⁴ There were nevertheless many shipmasters who sailed out of the same port throughout their naval

¹¹⁸ For the Tudor sailor, see G. V. Scammell, 'Manning the English merchant service in the sixteenth century', *MM* 56 (1970), pp. 131–54, pp. 137–38.

¹¹⁹ *Norwell*, p. 378; E36/204, p. 232; *CCR*, 1343–46, p. 132; E101/27/25, m. 2.

¹²⁰ BL, Add MS 7967, fol. 98v; BL, Cotton MS, Nero C.VIII, fol. 265r; E101/25/9.

¹²¹ E101/25/9; E101/25/24, n. 35.

¹²² Lawrence commanded the *Richegayne* in 1324 when the ship formed part of the flotilla that transported the king's army to Bordeaux, while Walter operated the same vessels in the following year when the ship freighted supplies to the earl of Surrey who was serving in Gascony, see BL, Add MS 7967, fol. 94r; E101/17/3, m. 7.

¹²³ E36/203, p. 382; E101/21/12, m. 3. The *Mariot* was recorded as 160 tuns burden and was operated by fifty-eight seafarers with Robert and fifty-six with Ralph.

¹²⁴ W. R. Childs, 'Irish merchants and seamen in late medieval England' *Irish historical studies*, 32, no. 125 (May, 2000), pp. 22–43, p. 32.

careers. John Philip served six times in this period and while he did so in three ships he always sailed from Plymouth.¹²⁵ This is in line with the findings from local studies which show that shipmasters who moved from port were generally in the minority.¹²⁶

Evidence relating to Exeter also highlights some possibilities about the lives of shipmasters in this period. In 1377 Exeter records show that relatively few shipmasters inhabited the confines of the port and in Exeter only one head of a household was described as a shipmaster.¹²⁷ It is difficult to create a picture of how a fourteenth-century shipmaster lived. The sources can suggest that they lived a somewhat itinerant life. This being said the evidence from Exeter should perhaps be treated with caution. We have seen above how shipmaster families operated out of ports over the years covered by this book, and it is likely that they lived in or around the towns they worked from. That they do not appear as heads of households may have more to do with financial considerations rather than the fact that did not reside in ports. The fact that shipmasters were not recorded as heads of households in Exeter may be a trait that is particular to this town.¹²⁸ For example, as we shall see men such as John Irp began their careers as shipmaster before being appointed to local port offices and then becoming important men in their own right as evidenced by their appearance on witness lists for various financial dealings. Evidence from Dartmouth certainly argues that shipowners and shipmasters were important figures that occupied town offices and as such were presumably, in many instances, heads of households.¹²⁹

The sources show that many families in port towns gravitated towards a life at sea, no doubt learning their skills from their fathers, brothers, cousins or uncles and putting their accumulated maritime knowledge to good use in the king's wars. However, the dangers of an occupation that involved regular sea service should not be underestimated and there was not only the risk of suffering injury or death at sea, but the home towns of the mariners could suffer devastating raids by the French.¹³⁰ That this invaluable service was sometimes not recognised

¹²⁵ C47/2/35; E101/19/38, m. 3; E101/19/39, m. 2; E101/24/9 (b), no. 15; E101/25/9.

¹²⁶ P. Dunn, 'After the Black Death', p. 196. This is based on an examination of Norwich merchants that operated out of Norfolk and Suffolk ports.

¹²⁷ M. Kowaleski, 'The port towns of fourteenth-century Devon', p. 67.

¹²⁸ Because Exeter was a port with a large hinterland and some distance upriver from the sea it is likely that it was more attractive to merchants, whereas Dartmouth and Plymouth were seaports with direct access to the sea and as a consequence were more likely to have been inhabited by shipmasters and shipowners.

¹²⁹ W. R. Childs, 'Devon's overseas trade in the late middle ages'.

¹³⁰ For example, Robert Finch, shipmaster and member of the influential Finch family from Winchelsea, was killed by the French during a raid in 1360 on the port of Winchelsea. Robert had previously served as the master of the *Cog Thomas* in 1338 and as the master of the *Seintemariacog* in 1342. See E101/21/7, m. 2; E36/204, p. 229. For his death, see *Chronicon anonymi Cantuariensis*, p. 61.

by contemporaries should not lessen its importance. Indeed, many medieval writers displayed a discourteous view towards mariners because their occupation could lead them to the horror of dying without confession and a decent Christian burial.¹³¹ Nevertheless, it is increasingly being recognised that medieval seafarers had impressive cognitive abilities as shown by their mental mastery of the information relating to tides and tidal streams or currents.¹³² These abilities were put to good use by Edward II and Edward III in their wars.

That the chronicles of the period on occasion treated mariners with disregard can lead to the assumption that seafarers lacked social standing at this time. Nevertheless, many shipmasters did in fact rise to become people of some importance, especially in a local context and there was considerable overlap between tradesmen, burgesses and shipmasters. Ipswich is a case in point. Many burgesses from the town commanded ships in the wars of the period, in addition to running trading enterprises and being involved in the sphere of local government. John Irp, for example, was a shipmaster from Ipswich who in 1324 commanded the ship *Godyer* during the Edward II's St Sardos expeditions. Nevertheless, during the period 1324–44 he also occupied the office of Ipswich town bailiff seventeen times.¹³³ Irp's career was not always exemplary, however, and in 1324 he was involved in a local scandal when he and several other mariners attacked a ship of Berwick in the port of Ipswich that was under the safe conduct of Robert Umfraville, earl of Angus.¹³⁴ After capturing the vessel he and his accomplices divided between themselves the cargo of skins, salmon and tallow. This act does not seem to have affected his career though because in 1331 he was appointed deputy to the king's butler in Ipswich, while in the same period he was also acting as controller of the customs.¹³⁵ By 1333 Irp was clearly a man of considerable local standing because not only was he actively involved in loaning significant sums of money to other Ipswich residents, but he was also called upon to witness several grants of lands and rents.¹³⁶ By 1338 he seems to have acquired wider significance because in that year queen Phillipa interceded in a dispute on his behalf to ensure that he continued to hold the office of controller of customs

¹³¹ M. Evans, *The death of kings: royal deaths in medieval England* (London, 2003), pp. 96–97, shows the negative ways in which medieval writers could portray the image of the medieval mariner; G. W. Coopland, 'A glimpse of late fourteenth-century ships and seamen', p. 189 describes a more positive medieval portraiture of a seamen. Indeed, Chaucer's shipman was also described as a 'gentil maryneer'; see *The works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, 2nd edn, ed. F. N. Robinson (Oxford, 1957), p. 160.

¹³² C. O. Frake, 'Cognitive maps of time and tide among medieval seafarers', *Man*, new series, vol. 20, no. 2 (1985), pp. 254–70.

¹³³ G. H. Martin, 'The Borough and the Merchant Community of Ipswich', pp. 214–15.

¹³⁴ CPR, 1324–27, p. 135.

¹³⁵ E122/50/20.

¹³⁶ E40/3390; E40/3392; C241/104/96, shows Irp loaned £40 to Robert Houell, son of a local knight.

at Ipswich.¹³⁷ Throughout his maritime career Irp and those he employed seem to have attracted controversy. In 1339 one of his ships was involved in a piratical attack on several Flemish vessels.¹³⁸ This particular incident was bad judgement because Edward III had just concluded expensive and exhaustive treaties of alliances with several Low Countries towns and princes. In 1348, however, Irp's luck finally ran out when he was amongst the many victims of the Black Death.¹³⁹

The Whatfields were another Ipswich family whose members served as ship-masters and town officials. In 1324 John Whatfield participated in the supply fleet sailing to Gascony. During the same decade his brother was a member of the town's government, when in 1328 he occupied the office of bailiff.¹⁴⁰ John de Thornegge of King's Lynn commanded the *Margrete* in 1322 but he also occupied the office of town mayor on six occasions between 1313 and 1331.¹⁴¹ In addition, men who appear as masters of a particular vessel in one document can be viewed elsewhere as the owner of another ship. John Giboun commanded the *Seintemariacog* in the Flanders expedition of 1338 and then the *Clement* during the Britany transport fleet of 1342; but he is also named as the owner of the *Alisen*, a ship commanded by John Dame, which participated in the Black Prince's transport flotilla in 1355. There does appear to have been only one person here called John Giboun, because on all the occasions his name appears it is in connection with the port of Sandwich. Clearly Giboun was an important figure in that port.¹⁴² The world of the medieval mariner was obviously complex in the fact that they could own yet not command a vessel when it was requisitioned, preferring instead to employ another man for that role. William Gamelyn from Hooke exemplifies the complexity of a life at sea during a period of intense warfare. In 1336 he commanded the *Welfare* as part of a defence armada against a possible French attack, and he can be seen commanding the same ship in 1337 and 1338. But in 1347 we catch a glimpse of him in his civilian role when he appears as master of the same ship as a trader in Chichester.¹⁴³ This short sketch drawing on the naval service records of medieval seamen shows that they and their ships were arrested for a variety of purposes and roles, and that on the whole they were a versatile part of the Edwardian military machine. These men could be masters

¹³⁷ CPR, 1338–40, p. 106.

¹³⁸ CPR, 1338–40, pp. 491–92.

¹³⁹ G. H. Martin, 'The Borough and the Merchant Community of Ipswich', p. 181.

¹⁴⁰ G. H. Martin, 'The borough and the merchant community of Ipswich', p. 180, appendix III, pp. 214–15; E101/16/40, main roll; BL, Add MS 7967, fol. 99r.

¹⁴¹ CPR, 1321–24, p. 134; S. A. Alsford, *The men behind the masque*, appendix 1.

¹⁴² E101/21/7, m. 2; E36/204, p. 222; E101/26/37, m. 3. Indeed it is likely that John Giboun had become a royal mariner by 1356 as he appears on a royal ship list dated to that year as the master of the *Robynet* (E101/27/5). In 1342 John was recorded as the owner of the *Clement* in the compensation document, see E101/24/9 (b).

¹⁴³ E101/19/38, m. 3; E101/19/39, m. 3; E101/21/7, m. 2; E122/190/5, Gamelyn's ship on this occasion freighted a cargo of wine from Bordeaux.

of victual ships on one campaign and by the next they could be in the thick of a major sea battle such as Sluys.

The analysis above highlights the careers of individual shipmasters whose service records are visible in the naval documents. We can, however, analyse the careers of shipmaster/merchants in greater detail. The careers of Thomas Melcheburn from King's Lynn and William Bacoun from Dartmouth highlight the potential successes that could be attained through involvement in the king's wars. We have already disused Thomas Melcheburn's role in the Scottish supply operations and it was his involvement in the northern war that provided the vehicle for him to rise to significant heights within the circle of advisors who surrounded Edward III.¹⁴⁴ Thomas' documented career begins in 1319 when he was given protection by Edward II for 'going by sea and land to divers places with his wares to trade'.¹⁴⁵ The description of Thomas as a king's merchant suggests that by 1319 he was already familiar with ministers in the king's government, whilst still actively trading on his own account. In fact there is evidence from a later petition that Thomas sent to the king in December 1319 that he had planned to sell his wares in Bruges, but his ship, the *Godyer*, was attacked en-route to this destination by men from Sluys. As recompense for this act Thomas asked the count of Flanders to pay him £80 in compensation. In 1327 he participated in the Scottish campaign as commander of the *Peter* of King's Lynn.¹⁴⁶ This last piece of evidence is extremely informative for while it is un-doubtable that Thomas personally participated in this expedition to curry favour with the new regime of Queen Isabella, it also highlights the fact that Thomas was a shipman. This suggests that before we see him in the records in 1319 he had previously been a shipmaster. By 1320 Thomas was one of the chamberlains of King's Lynn.¹⁴⁷ His importance in Norfolk's maritime affairs soon brought him to the attention of Edward III's ministers and by the 1330s he was beginning to be of more than local significance, as is shown by his attendance at parliament in December 1330 as a representative of King's Lynn.¹⁴⁸ Nevertheless, even though Thomas was attending parliament he was still actively trading and in 1332, along with his brother William, he was given a protection to travel to and trade in Norway.¹⁴⁹ Indeed, Thomas seems to have developed important connections with Norway and not only did he regularly trade there but he was also appointed by the king

¹⁴⁴ See above, pp. 158–59.

¹⁴⁵ CPR, 1317–21, p. 344.

¹⁴⁶ CPR, 1327–30, p. 104.

¹⁴⁷ Institute of Historical Research, *The manuscripts of the corporation of Southampton and King's Lynn, eleventh report, appendix III* (Historical manuscripts commission, 1887), pp. 213–31. See also S. Alsford, *The men behind the masque: office-holding in East Anglia boroughs, 1272–1460* (1998), appendix, 1, available at <http://users.trytel.com/~tristan/towns/mcontent.html> (accessed 13 January 2011).

¹⁴⁸ CCR, 1330–33, p. 177.

¹⁴⁹ CPR, 1330–34, p. 372.

to search and confiscate any vessels that came from Norway with the intention of trading foodstuffs and arms with the Scots.¹⁵⁰ By 1333 he had been appointed royal custom collector in the port of King's Lynn.¹⁵¹ It was during this time that Thomas also began building and maintaining royal vessels.¹⁵²

However, it was the Scottish wars from 1333 to 1347 that provided Thomas with the foundation to advance his career. As noted above, after Edward III abandoned his Scottish ambitions and began a war against France in 1337, Thomas and his brother became the lynch pins of a new system devised to supply the king's garrisons in Scotland. In 1336 Edward III more or less privatised the victual operation in the hands of Thomas and his brother William. From this date they accounted directly with the Exchequer in London for the supplies they freighted to the receiver of victuals at Berwick. It was during this period in which they formed a close working partnership with Robert Tonge, who was receiver in the north for many years in the 1330s. Yet, Thomas' influence was no means confined to the northern war and he was actively involved in continental maritime duties. Between 1338 and 1340 he supplied four of his ships to transport diplomatic embassies to the Holy Roman Empire, as well as participating directly in 'difficult business on behalf of the king'.¹⁵³ In 1344 he lent the king the sum of £200 and he was appointed the mayor of the wool staple in Bruges.¹⁵⁴ These two events were probably connected. The trust he had gained was proven when in 1344 it was Thomas who collected the king's great crown from the merchants of Germany.¹⁵⁵ His reward came in 1347 when after the capture of Calais Edward III gave to Thomas three inns taken from Wynnocus Doystretwyk, one of the defeated citizens of Calais.¹⁵⁶

William Bacoun was another shipmaster who played a considerable role in the wars of the 1330s and 1340s. Bacoun was a shipmaster from Dartmouth who was descended from a family of middling significance.¹⁵⁷ By the time William becomes visible in the sources he is already a man of some standing in the town of Dartmouth. This is evidenced by his grant of some land at the waterside in Clifton, Dartmouth, to the abbot and convent of Torre.¹⁵⁸ Although William's family must have had disposable assets in terms of lands and wealth it is beyond

¹⁵⁰ CPR, 1340–43, p. 212; CPR, 1348–50, p. 287.

¹⁵¹ CPR, 1340–43, p. 383.

¹⁵² CPR, 1334–38, p. 403.

¹⁵³ E101/21/33; CPR, 1343–45, p. 556.

¹⁵⁴ CPR, 1343–45, pp. 43, 156.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 251.

¹⁵⁶ CPR, 1345–48, p. 563.

¹⁵⁷ G. R. Cushway, 'The Lord of the Sea', p. 163 argues that Bacoun was a clerk. However, this assertion probably relates to the fact that Cushway was investigating the clerical officials that were involved in ship requisition and Bacoun's role in this work alongside John Watenhul led to the conclusion that Bacoun was also a clerk.

¹⁵⁸ R. Freeman, *Dartmouth: a new history of the port and its people* (Dartmouth, 1987), pp. 21, 23. For the grant, see C143/207/20.

doubt that he began his career at sea as a shipmaster. In 1326 he commanded a vessel that was hired by two merchants under the patronage of a royal official named Peter Galliciano. As part of this contract Bacoun was to freight grain to Bordeaux and return and with a cargo of wine.¹⁵⁹ It is important to stress that Galliciano was an experienced diplomat who had participated in several important embassies to France and Spain in this period.¹⁶⁰ Moreover, and perhaps even more relevant for this study, Galliciano also had an additional career as a merchant. It seems that through his contacts in Gascony Galliciano was no stranger to maritime commerce.¹⁶¹ Importantly for Bacoun his association with this royal official earned him patronage from the crown. In the early 1330s Bacoun was granted a corrody from Plympton Priory.¹⁶² This gave Bacoun the right to food and clothing from priory, which may have been worth up to £3 per year.¹⁶³ Such grants of favour from the king, however, did not always ingratiate Bacoun with his fellow Dartmouth residents. In 1333, for example, he was named by John de Tuwyng in a legal proceeding in which Tuwyng claimed that the corrody from Plympton Priory did in fact belong to him by right of family inheritance.¹⁶⁴

Nevertheless, grants such as these show that by the early 1330s Bacoun was known to and involved with members of the royal administration, a familiarity that earned him grants from the king. These contacts ensured that from the late 1320s Bacoun was granted local offices relating to maritime affairs. In March 1331 Bacoun was awarded the office of deputy to the king's butler for Cornwall.¹⁶⁵ This appointment, in addition to his association with members of the king's court, raised Bacoun to a level of county importance and by the late 1330s he was known to the king's council as a man who could be trusted to deal with naval matters. In 1337 he was appointed by the royal council to take oaths from Dartmouth mariners who were suspected of an act of piracy against a Spanish ship off the coast of Guernsey.¹⁶⁶ In this incident seafarers from several English ports had taken several tuns of white wine from Laurence de Seint Sebastian and distributed the wine across the ports located along the southern coast of

¹⁵⁹ CPR, 1324–1327, p. 314

¹⁶⁰ CPR, 1324–27, pp. 88, 181; CPR, 1327–30, pp. 250, 453. From his service record Galliciano seemed to specialise in Gascon and Spanish affairs.

¹⁶¹ CPR, 1324–27, p. 305. It would also seem that one of Peter's relatives (Bertrand Galliciano) who is named as a merchant in the protection issued by the king in September 1326 was involved in trade with Peter.

¹⁶² SC8/77/3803.

¹⁶³ C. G. Lewin, *Pensions and insurance before 1800: A social history* (Edinburgh, 2003), pp. 37–49. This was not an insignificant sum for in 1346 anyone who possessed land worth £10 had to serve as (or provide) an hobelar in the king's army. See A. Ayton and P. Preston, *The battle of Crécy*, p. 177.

¹⁶⁴ SC8/77/3803.

¹⁶⁵ CPR, 1330–34, p. 78.

¹⁶⁶ CPR, 1334–38, p. 377. The ship was called the *Seinte Martin* of San Sebastian.

England.¹⁶⁷ It was at this stage in his career that Bacoun became involved in military logistics, a role that would dominate much of his time over the coming years. For instance in 1338 he was given powers to requisition ships on behalf of the king from ports located in southwest.¹⁶⁸

Bacoun's involvement in impressing merchantmen for the king's Low Countries expeditions during 1338 marked the start of a sustained period of involvement in the king's wars; in particular he developed a close association with affairs in Brittany. In 1341, for example, he personally commanded the small fleet of three ships that transported Gawain Corder to Brittany for important diplomatic negotiations.¹⁶⁹ In the following year he was appointed to arrest shipping in the southwest for the king's planned expedition to that same duchy, whilst also heading a commission that was to investigate an act of piracy committed by several Plymouth mariners against a ship of Brittany.¹⁷⁰ In October 1342 he completed his busy duties commanding the *Trinite* of Dartmouth during the English invasion of Brittany.¹⁷¹ It is beyond doubt that by this stage William had become a shipowner in his own right because we have a rare surviving compensation account which clearly shows he was the owner of three vessels. One of which was the *Trinite*.¹⁷² By 1343 William's service for the crown in maritime issues ensured that he was called upon many times during the increasing naval involvement because of the French war during the 1340s. In 1343 he was appointed to his most significant duty to date when along with John Watenhul he was ordered to investigate the reasons why 230 ships had deserted the king outside Brest and Vannes in the winter of 1342. In fact Bacoun and Watenhul formed a close relationship during the late 1330s and through the 1340s. It is beyond doubt that in addition to owning three ships Bacoun's close association with the king's government must have ensured that he developed into a significant figure in the town of Dartmouth. This was perhaps given more impetus because Dartmouth was a town dominated by shipowners.¹⁷³ As such it comes as no surprise to find Bacoun occupying the office of town mayor in this period.¹⁷⁴

Crew Size and Manning

Another important aspect that relates to mariner service concerns the crew sizes employed aboard ships of the period. If the numbers of mariners that were employed on the same ship in varying expeditions remained relatively stable then

¹⁶⁷ SC8/73/3649.

¹⁶⁸ CCR, 1337–39, p. 339.

¹⁶⁹ E101/23/5.

¹⁷⁰ CPR, 1340–43, p. 540.

¹⁷¹ E101/29/4 (b).

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

¹⁷³ See, for example, W. R. Childs, 'Devon's overseas trade in the late middle ages'.

¹⁷⁴ R. Freeman, *Dartmouth*, p. 23.

we could assume that each vessel had an optimum crew size for its operational effectiveness that the crown was keen to maintain. By examining ten 'sample' ships that served throughout this period, and which provide a general spread of geographical locations and participation through several fleets from 1338 to 1359, we can seek to discover whether crew sizes dramatically altered from one fleet to the next. Any significant fluctuations in crew numbers would provide evidence that the requisition process, and mariner recruitment, was in some way haphazard. Conversely, stability in crew sizes would show that the government, and the arresting officials, had a policy that when requisitioning a ship for service the overall numbers of seamen employed aboard would be the exact number that the vessel required for optimum efficiency.¹⁷⁵

When the ten sample ships are examined it is found that, generally, there is a remarkable stability in crew size. For example, the *Cog Johan* from Gosforth, commanded by Ralph Redberd, sailed in three fleets in 1338, 1340 and 1342, and on each occasion the crew size remained relatively stable. In 1338 twenty-nine mariners operated this ship, while at the battle of Sluys it was manned by twenty-two seamen and in 1342 a total of twenty-eight mariners sailed aboard. Indeed, what is striking about this vessel's manning is that the fleet in which we would expect the largest crew to be aboard, the battle of Sluys in 1340, was in fact the time when the fewest mariners were aboard. Similarly, the *Godbyete* from Hook, commanded by Robert Cole, sailed in three fleets from 1342 to 1345. This vessel first sailed in August 1342 with a complement of ten mariners when it was part of the fleet that freighted the earl of Northampton's force to Brittany. Following this the ship returned to England, with the same number of seamen aboard, to transport the king. But in 1345, when it was involved in the transportation of Henry of Grosmont's army to Bordeaux, eleven mariners worked this ship. As such the crew numbers on board this vessel did not fluctuate dramatically throughout its service, even when the continental destinations were dramatically different.¹⁷⁶ Moreover, even when a ship was utilised through

¹⁷⁵ The ten ships are the *Cog Johan* from Gosford, commanded by Ralph Redberd; the *Nicholas* from Great Yarmouth, commanded by John Norman; the *Gracedieu* from Bristol, commanded by John Seys; the *George* from Boston, commanded by Adam Permay; the *Margrete* from Great Yarmouth, commanded by William Fille; the *Katerine* from London, commanded by William Churchgate; the *Mariote* from Dartmouth, commanded by Richard Baker; the *Godbyete* from Hook, commanded by Robert Cole; the *Margrete* from Great Yarmouth, commanded by Richard Runham and the *Godyer* from Hull, commanded by William Est. See BL, Add Ms 7967, fols 94v–95r; E101/17/3, m. 6b; E101/19/38, m. 3; E101/19/39, m. 2; E101/20/6, m. 1; E101/20/16; E101/21/10, m. 5; E101/22/25, m. 3; E101/25/9; E101/26/38, m. 2; E101/27/23, m. 1; *Norwell*, pp. 363–86; E36/204, pp. 221, 222, 225, 228; 233, 234, 235, 236, 237.

¹⁷⁶ The distance from Portsmouth to Brest is 226 miles, whereas the distance from Portsmouth to Bordeaux is over 414 miles. A ship travelling 1 knot per hour would be able to travel roughly 24–26 miles per day. Thus the journey from Portsmouth to Bordeaux could be achieved in roughly 17 days. However, it must be remembered that these are estimates.

the pre- and post-Black Death periods the effects of the disease do not seem to have drastically altered the numbers of mariners. For instance, the *George* from Boston, commanded by Adam Permay, sailed in 1342, 1355 and 1359. In 1342 it had a crew compliment of forty-six mariners, and in 1355 and 1359 there were thirty-three. In short in some cases the possibility is that the crew simply came along with the ship for wages when it was requisitioned.

The service record of one vessel illustrates the fluctuations in crew numbers that could occur from one expedition to the next. The *Margrete* from Great Yarmouth, commanded by William Fille, participated in the fleet that transported the bishop of Lincoln to the Low Countries in 1337, and three years later was present at the battle of Sluys. Yet in 1337 this ship had a crew of eighty mariners while at the battle of Sluys it was operated by fifty-five seamen.¹⁷⁷ Thus, a vessel could, potentially, have its crew decreased by a third and still remain effective.¹⁷⁸ As such it seems that in this period when the crown requisitioned vessels for its transport fleets the crew sizes aboard generally remained consistent. In fact it is likely that requisitioned vessels kept most of their usual crew on board for both naval and trading voyages.

Another question with regard to ships' crews, which requires investigation is were the numbers of mariners that each ship required to sail it effectively linked to its possible continental destination? We have seen in Chapter 1 that a voyage to northern France would take two to three days, while one to Bordeaux or even Spain could be achieved in less than a week.¹⁷⁹ Did the intended destination, and length of voyage, have an impact on the size of the crew that worked the ships requisitioned for service? For example, if the destination was in northern France would a smaller crew be employed owing to the relative short sea crossing? Considering these latter points it will come as no surprise to learn that the same ships, which in one expedition sailed to northern France, were still employing similar numbers of mariners aboard when they sailed on longer voyages, such

¹⁷⁷ Each of the twenty ships in the fleet that transported the bishop to the Low Countries was manned by eighty seamen. The numbers of mariners on this fleet make it unusual for a diplomatic flotilla. However, it is likely such large numbers of mariners were placed on board because of the delicate nature of the bishop's talks. Moreover, such a well-prepared fleet ensured that the bishop was well protected on his voyage and that he arrived in style, see E101/20/16.

¹⁷⁸ The next greatest fluctuation in crew size occurred on board the *George* of Boston, commanded by Adam Permay when it went from a crew compliment of forty-six mariners to thirty-three from 1342 to 1355. Following this the next greatest change in crew size occurred on the *Godyer* of Hull, commanded by William Est, which went from crew of thirty in 1338 to nineteen in 1342. Following these vessels was the *Gracedieu* of Bristol, commanded by John Seys, when from 1337 to 1338 its crew size was reduced from fifty-three mariners to forty-six. The rest of the ships generally had crew changes of just one to four mariners. The *Katerine* from London, commanded by William Churchgate, for example, went from a crew of eleven mariners in 1342 to fourteen seamen in 1345.

¹⁷⁹ This was not always the case and in 1343 it took Edward three weeks to sail back to England from Brittany, owing to the appalling weather conditions, see E36/204, pp. 37–39.

as from Plymouth to Bordeaux. For example, the *George*, commanded by Adam Permay, as noted above sailed to Brest in 1342 with a crew of forty-six mariners. Yet in 1355 thirty-three mariners sailed the same vessel to Bordeaux showing that in this case there was no need for 'extra' crew members.¹⁸⁰ Indeed, Robert Cole, master of the *Godbyete* of Hook also sailed to Brest in 1342 with a crew compliment of eleven seamen aboard, while in 1345 the same ship was operated by ten mariners when it transported Henry of Grosmont to Bordeaux. Consequently, the conclusion to be drawn from this sample is that regardless of the destination of the intended expedition when the crown requisitioned ships they were usually operated by the same crew numbers, even when longer voyages were anticipated. This, as a corollary, suggests that there was uniformity in crew sizes during ship requisition and that the government probably took advice from shipowners and masters about optimum crew size.

One final point in relation to crew sizes needs to be analysed. Namely, were crew numbers increased for transport fleets, or were the same crew members who were aboard the ship at its time of arrest simply employed in naval duties? It has been suggested that usually one man is needed for every ten tuns. As such a ship of 140 tuns, such as the *Bremen Cog*, would have required fourteen mariners to operate it. This being said, the curators of the *Bremen Cog* argue that a crew of twenty should be viewed as the optimum number of mariners required to man the vessel.¹⁸¹ Such numbers of mariners employed aboard ships on trading voyages was not uncommon and cogs that operated in the Baltic could have crews of up to forty-five men.¹⁸² In comparison a surviving order from the reign of Edward II shows that for army transportation purposes a 240 tun vessel was expected to have sixty mariners on board, which equates to four seamen per ten tuns.¹⁸³ Consequently are we to assume from this order that a ship arrested for transportation purposes was expected to have at least twice the number of mariners aboard than it would have in its trading capacity? By examining the tonnages and crew size ratio it would seem that crew sizes were certainly increased when a ship was requisitioned for transportation purposes. In 1338 the *Rose* of Ravenspur, commanded by Roger de Ravensser, was recorded by the clerks at 120 tuns with a crew compliment of forty-six mariners, which gives this ship a man:ton ratio of roughly 3:1.¹⁸⁴ Similarly, in 1338 the *Laurence* of

¹⁸⁰ The sea crossing to Bordeaux is some 450 miles. If a ship were capable of travelling at one knot per hour this voyage would take roughly two weeks. However, a ship travelling at some four knots per hour would cover a distance of some 100 to 120 miles in twenty-four hours, so it is possible that the journey to Gascony could be made within four to five days and the sea crossing to Brittany could be made in two days. For the possible speed of medieval ships, see M. Prestwich, *Armies and warfare*, p. 273.

¹⁸¹ C. Tipping, 'Cargo handling and the medieval cog', *MM* 80 (1994), pp. 3–15, p. 11.

¹⁸² H. Brand, 'Roundtable reviews of Robin Ward', p. 312.

¹⁸³ *CPR*, 1321–24, p. 417.

¹⁸⁴ E101/21/10, m. 2.

Hull, a ship of 40 tuns and commanded by Richard Ulso, had a crew of twenty mariners, giving it a ratio of 2:1.¹⁸⁵ Similar trends are evident even after the Black Death. In 1355 the *Katherine del Milne* of Ipswich, commanded by Robert Waryn had a crew of twenty-one mariners when the ship was recorded at 80 tuns and the *Petre de South Ferriby*, a ship of 40 tuns and commanded by John Page, had a crew of twenty seamen.¹⁸⁶ These findings go some way to explain why in 1342, as noted above, it looks as though the majority of Great Yarmouth's population were serving aboard the thirty-three ships supplied by this port. It is argued here that when ships were arrested for transportation purposes the crews were artificially increased, with the extra mariners being 'pressed' from the area designated as maritime lands.

Although it may seem that crew sizes were increased for transportation duties, whether they were actually doubled remains in the realms of speculation. One example illustrates this point. In 1324 the *Richagayne* from Weymouth commanded by Walter atte Lane sailed to Gascony as part of the St Sardos transport flotilla. While this vessel was in port Nicholas Huggate recorded that he added seven further mariners to the existing crew of twenty-eight, adding that they were done so '*pro dupplici eskipamento*.'¹⁸⁷ Of course, what may have occurred here is that by adding these extra seven men the normal crew that manned this ship on trading voyages was doubled. We are also told that this vessel was 200 tuns burthen. If we consider that at 140 tuns the *Bremen Cog* required twenty mariners in order to operate during a trading voyage it then is unlikely that a larger ship would sail in a transport fleet with a 'double crew' of twenty-eight mariners. The only reasonable conclusion to draw from this evidence is that the term *dupplici eskipamento* did not necessarily equate to an actual doubling of the crew size and was in fact used in some generalised way to denote the fact that the crew had been strengthened from what would have been the ship's normal operating crew size.

It is clear, therefore, that in the preparations for naval logistical expeditions merchant ships had their crew sizes increased. In some cases, such as the ships from Great Yarmouth in 1342, these 'new' members of the crew would have been gathered or 'pressed' into service from the local villages in Norfolk that were within six leagues of the sea coast. At other times, however, seamen would be added while a ship was in another port, giving a more eclectic crew. Why the crown actually increased the numbers of mariners serving in the transport and supply fleets remains difficult to answer. In relation to the supply flotillas sailing to Scotland it seems reasonable to expect that crew levels would be increased so the extra mariners could protect the cargo that they were freighting as well as themselves. But with regard to the transport fleets one would assume that the

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶ E101/26/38, m. 2.

¹⁸⁷ BL, Add MS 7967, fols 94r.

opposite would be the case, and in order to freight as many soldiers as possible to the theatre of war ships' crews would actually be decreased. There must have been a reason behind this because by employing more mariners the crown was also increasing the wage bill.

One possible explanation for an increase in the crew may lie in what actually happened at the point of disembarkation. Were mariners, for example, expected to be involved in the process of unloading the vast amounts of supplies, horses, carts, wagons, ammunition and other military equipment? This seems likely for in order to get the army ashore as quickly as possible more hands made light work. Another possibility may lie in what the ships were expected to do after the army had been unloaded. It may have been the case that they were expected to 'shadow' the army for several days, burning and destroying enemy ports and shipping as they sailed along the coast. As such once the soldiers had disembarked large crews would provide the men required to fight naval engagements. This also seems a likely explanation. Indeed, why would the crown go to all the expense of raising a fleet, paying extra seamen, and then simply allow them to sail away after disembarkation? The fact that ships were used for more than just transport duties can be seen in their dates. We have just noted above that a ship, in fine weather, could sail as far as Spain in as little as four days.¹⁸⁸ Yet most transport vessels in this period served for an average of a month. In 1338 each vessel served for an average number of eighteen days, while in 1342 each ship served for forty-four days. These periods of service must mean that after the ships had transported the army they were required to stay on active duty for some time, because while they were paid their wages from the time they arrived in port it is likely that in the majority of cases they only waited for two to three weeks for the arrival of all the troops.¹⁸⁹ Considering that sailing to northern France would take only a matter of days their length of service suggests that they were employed on other business after disembarkation. As such it is argued here that in the past the role of ships in the French war has been greatly underestimated: after unloading their cargoes of men, horses and supplies they took a more active naval role and harried the coast and enemy shipping. Examples of this are not hard to find. In 1346 after the ships had disembarked the army they attacked Norman ports and enemy ships.¹⁹⁰ Indeed, evidence also suggests that English ships may have played a role in the attack on Caen because Bartholomew Burghersh noted in his letter to John Stratford that during the attack on Caen 'the ships came to the mouth of the water that goes up to Caen;

¹⁸⁸ See W. R. Childs, *Anglo Castilian trade*, p. 154.

¹⁸⁹ The exception to this was the 145 ships' crews that were paid wages in 1342 so they would remain in port; see E372/187, mm. 42, 48. Land soldiers were paid from the day they arrived at the embarkation port so it is possible that ships' crews were also paid in the same manner. On the day that wages commenced, see A. Ayton, *Knights and warhorses*, p. 146.

¹⁹⁰ See, for example, N. H. Nicolas, *History of the royal navy*, II, p. 92; *Avesbury*, p. 359.

they have burnt and destroyed some hundred ships up the coast'.¹⁹¹ Moreover, in 1342 the ship *Edward* of Winchelsea, with John Montgomery the admiral of the western fleet aboard, was clearly employed as a ship of war and was manned by men-at-arms and archers.¹⁹² This vessel appears to have been a command ship for the rest of the fleet that was supposed to remain on active service but which deserted outside Brest and Vannes.¹⁹³ It is worth bearing in mind that in 1342, along with the armed ship of Montgomery, the shipowners who were providing vessels in return for pardons did so on the strict understanding that the ships came fully manned with 'gentz armees' aboard.¹⁹⁴ As such it is likely that English transport ships in the fourteenth century were expected to raid, patrol, intercept enemy shipping and fight as need and opportunity dictated.¹⁹⁵ By providing extra men the king was also ensuring that the ships arrested for his service were adequately protected. This was important because in the period under investigation here shipowners were providing their vessels free of charge and so it may have been expected that the king did his best to ensure that they remained as safe as possible by taking on the extra burden of an increase in the wage costs.¹⁹⁶ After all what the crown required was the continued support of the English merchant marine.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹¹ *Murimuth*, pp. 198–200; D. Hughes, *Illustrations of Chaucer's England*, p. 36. For example, the *George* commanded by Robert Salmon was sent back from Caen to Winchelsea, see CCR, 1346–49, p. 95.

¹⁹² E101/21/36, mm. 2–4. The men on board were only paid half wages, presumably because they had no horses with them.

¹⁹³ It is likely that only a selected number of ships would stay on active service for an agreed length of time and so the end date of service that the clerks had written down at the embarkation point would still be accurate. Indeed, it is likely that the admiral provided accurate days of service for the extra ships that had remained under his command.

¹⁹⁴ SC1/39, nos 15, 81; SC1/40, nos, 10, 12, 19; SC1/41, no. 66.

¹⁹⁵ For a similar suggestion, see G. R. Cushway, 'The lord of the sea', p. 153.

¹⁹⁶ The payment of ton-tight (3s 4d per ton for every three months served) was not officially formalised until 1380. Although the king did on occasion pay compensation to shipowners because their vessel sustained damage in government service this was done so entirely at the king's discretion (E101/24/9 (b) records such compensation payments). In 1301 the crown paid shipowners the impressive sum of 7s per ton this was not followed by Edward II or Edward III. For 1301, see British Museum Add MS 7966 (a), fols 102–03, 130–31.

¹⁹⁷ It is also important to note that ships were raised during campaigns to guard the sea crossing, protect English ports and operate as communication ships. For example, in 1325 the Cinque Ports put to sea a flotilla of twenty-one vessels manned by 1,006 mariners to guard the coast after the earl of Warrene had sailed to Gascony (E101/17/10). And during the Low Countries expeditions, in response the French assembling a fleet, on 27 September 1338 Edward's home government organised a flotilla under the command of Peter Bard, admiral of the southern fleet, whilst his colleague, Thomas de Drayton, admiral of the north, received similar orders, see *Treaty rolls*, II, 1337–39, ed. J. Ferguson (London, 1972), pp. 297–98, nos, 844, 845, 847. These requests seem to have been met in part because Thomas de Drayton expended £400 on mariners' and archers' wages, and John Crabbe was issued with a further £52 20d for the payment of wages made to the mariners of the north from 4 April to 12 June

When we examine the crews that operated naval vessels during this period we must not forget the role that the constables performed. This class of person appears regularly in the naval documentation and participated in most fleets. That constables have received little attention in the literature is probably down to the fact that their role is little understood.¹⁹⁸ It is beyond doubt that they had a military function to perform because they usually sailed aboard a large proportion of the ships that formed army transport fleets, but it was unusual for them to appear aboard supply vessels.¹⁹⁹ Further, the destination of the armadas does not seem to have affected whether constables were recruited. Out of the fleet of 148 ships that freighted the earl of Derby to Bordeaux in 1345 forty-eight had constables aboard. Similarly of the 403 ships that transported Edward III's army to Flanders in 1338 313 vessels had a constable as part of the crew, and in the Scottish campaign of 1335 out of a fleet numbering 189 ships eighty-six had a constable aboard.²⁰⁰ Consequently constables served in all theatres of operations. Further, it has been argued recently that discipline played an important role in the formation of Edwardian armies and 'superimposed regulatory structures had a profound influence on the fabric of armies and how they functioned.'²⁰¹ On land such issues were the responsibility of the constable and marshal of the army alongside the retinue captain. It is argued here that the constable aboard a ship played a similar role.

That constables appear with such frequency in military transport ships, and not supply vessels, suggests that they had a military purpose for two main reasons. First, because many men operating the ships may not have been mariners, and were raised through commissions of array, it may have been that the constable's role was to ensure these men were kept in order while they served.²⁰² Second, they would also ensure that all the ships of the fleet coalesced together and

1339, see E101/21/31; E101/22/8. For evidence of ships being used as communication links, see E101/22/38, which highlights the way the king's ships were used as a communication link during the 1338 and 1340 expeditions.

¹⁹⁸ N. A. M. Rodger, *Safeguard of the sea*, pp. 138–39 briefly discusses the role of the constable. See also G. R. Cushway, 'The lord of the sea', p. 140.

¹⁹⁹ Crew sizes are rarely recorded for supply ships. However, there were three vessels that freighted supplies to Scotland in 1336 that did have constables on board. These were the *Nicholas* of Bristol commanded by John Trollay; the *Gracedieu* of Bristol commanded by John Selys and the *Rodecogge* of Rosse commanded by John de la Roche, see E101/20/6, mm. 1–5. These vessels did have large crews of 38, 50 and 26 mariners respectively, which suggests that they may have been employed as ships of war after they had freighted the supplies to the depots. The dates of service, which ran from 19 October 1336 to 24 December 1336, certainly point to the fact that they remained on active duty after they had completed their supply role.

²⁰⁰ BL, Cotton MS, Nero C.VIII, fols 264r–265v; E101/19/16; E101/19/22; E101/21/7; E101/21/10; E101/21/12; Norwell; E101/25/9.

²⁰¹ A. Ayton, 'Armies and military communities in fourteenth-century England', *Soldiers, nobles and gentlemen*, pp. 215–99, p. 232.

²⁰² N. H. Nicolas, *History of the royal navy*, vol. 1, pp. 401–2. Also argues that constables had a disciplinary role.

that no vessels engaged in piratical activity. In short they were an independent link between the crown and the crew, and although they were certainly below the ship's master in the hierarchical structure, they were directly responsible to the king and not the shipmaster. The importance of their role in such issues is evidenced by the act of piracy that was committed in 1338 by a large section of the transport fleet that had conveyed Edward's forces to Flanders. The fact that these ships did so after the army had disembarked shows that the constable may have remained behind with the land army.²⁰³ Indeed, some of the ships involved in the 1338 incident certainly had constables aboard on the outward journey to Flanders.²⁰⁴ Finally, it has been suggested that the constable's role may have been to lead the ships' compliments of soldiers.²⁰⁵ While this is a possibility, if this was the case they would only appear on those vessels that were used as 'ships of war'. That they appear in every transport fleet, and aboard most ships, argues that they had a different purpose. They would not have been responsible for the retinue that were being transported because this was the responsibility of the retinue captain. As such the role of these constables seems to have been similar to the duties of the *ductores* or *centenars* that were placed in charge of armed men arrayed from towns during the early period of the Edwardian wars. That their role was similar to the *ductores* is alluded to in an order issued on 20 June 1372 when the sheriff of Kent was told to make an inquisition with the constables in order to investigate a complaint regarding several instances of extortions committed by mariners and shipmasters. The fact that the sheriff was ordered to work with the constables on this issue shows that they were involved in discipline issues.²⁰⁶

The analysis on the constable leads into a discussion on the hierarchies that existed amongst crews in this period. It is clear from legal documents that the master of a ship had certain legal obligations, and indeed rights, above that of the crew.²⁰⁷ This is not to say that mariners were devoid of privileges and most seafarers on a trading voyage would be allowed some space for carrying small amounts of cargo (whether this was their own merchandise or whether they were acting for someone else is unimportant).²⁰⁸ Nevertheless, masters certainly had disciplinary authority over the crew which could involve putting a man off ship and imposing fines. It would also be the case that the master of a ship

²⁰³ CPR, 1338–40, pp. 491–92.

²⁰⁴ For example, the *Nicholas* of Great Yarmouth, commanded by Robert Tynwit, was involved in this act of piracy and on the outward journey this vessel had a constable onboard, see *Ibid.*, p. 491; E101/21/10, m. 5.

²⁰⁵ G. R. Cushway, 'The lord of the sea', p. 140.

²⁰⁶ CCR, 1369–74, p. 439.

²⁰⁷ See, for example, R. Ward, *The world of the medieval shipmaster*; T. J. Runyan, 'The rolls of Oleron and the admiralty court', pp. 100–4.

²⁰⁸ If mariners chose to take a share of the profits of the cargo, or indeed freighted their own merchandise, they did not usually receive additional wages.

was usually the most skilled mariner aboard, or he may even have had a stake in the vessel he was sailing. Such considerations would naturally lead to the development of a ship hierarchy in which the master held responsibility for the vessels he was in charge of. What blurs this issue is the change that may have occurred when a ship was requisitioned for war into the king's service. The ships' crew would certainly have remained aboard but as we have seen in addition to a number of extra mariners a constable could also be admitted. It would certainly have been the case that the master still retained his normal authority, and this would have been upheld by the admiralty court. Moreover, the constable was always recorded after the shipmaster in all Exchequer and Chancery documents which suggests that he was subordinate to the master of the vessel. Nevertheless, shipboard hierarchies could become blurred when it came to dividing the spoils of war, and it was not unusual in this period that such gains were usually split on an equal share basis amongst the crew, including the master.²⁰⁹ This being said it is likely that in requisitioned fleets the master had authority over the vessel, whilst the constable's duty was to ensure the behaviour of the 'extra' crew members. Indeed, as with land armies, discipline controls in maritime affairs were employed as a means to cement the men that were 'pressed' into service in order to create working units that could operate under pressure. In short the constable was given temporary power over individuals who would not normally serve on board the ship they were operating so that the naval force did not fracture into undisciplined flotillas during any expedition.

*

This chapter has analysed several major issues relevant to the maritime dimension of the wars conducted by Edward II and Edward III. It has discussed the increasing 'privatisation' of the organisation of war from 1336 in Scotland and 1345 in France. However, central to the discussion was an assessment of the potential size of the merchant fleet, and an analysis of the mariners and the crew sizes on board the ships. There it was found that 4,065 individual ships participated in the campaigns of the period. However, this total comes with perhaps a 20 per cent margin of error. The investigation of the careers of several mariners led to the conclusion that seamen in the fourteenth century were a versatile and integral component of Edwardian military campaigns. We saw that in some cases men could rise to great heights through involvement in the maritime dimension of the war. This section also examined the possible levels of resources each port was likely to have committed to the campaigns and argued that each port probably contributed at most 50 per cent of its shipping stock to any individual expedition. Further, there was an examination of the crew sizes aboard ships and the

²⁰⁹ See, for example, R. G. Marsden, *Law and custom*, pp. 36–37. It should be noted that the constable is never mentioned in these arrangements and it is unsure if he was permitted a proportion of any booty from captured prizes.

possible reasons as to why these seem to have been increased. One suggestion was that mariners aided the disembarkation of the army and protected the fleet after the army had gone ashore. In addition the king may have been obliged to at least ensure some degree of safety for the ships his forces were using. Finally the role of the constable was addressed and it was concluded that they were admitted to the crew to perform a disciplinary role similar to that of retinue captains and *ductores*. Indeed, what this book has shown is the often ignored point that the English kings' wars in Scotland, France, the Low Countries, Spain and Portugal were wholly reliant on the English merchant fleet and the men who found employment within it.

Conclusion

This study has investigated the maritime involvement in the wars conducted by Edward II and Edward III between 1320 and 1360, a 40-year period that certainly witnessed England's greatest military endeavours of the middle ages.¹ The kings of England were, for much of this time, engaged in two inter-related wars against two other kingdoms. The militarisation of sections of England's population had been gathering pace since the wars initiated by Edward I in the 1280s.² This study has aimed to demonstrate that it was not only the English landed community that felt the impact of these wars, but also the maritime sections of society. Indeed, to analyse fully the effects of the wars on England's society and economy one needs to take account of all aspects of the war effort. Edward III did not assemble 14,000 men for the Crécy expedition; he actually recruited 30,000, as he also raised 16,000 mariners to serve on board the ships that transported his army. This point is pertinent to every campaign of the period and obliges us to radically revise our estimates of recruitment and demands on the population.³

The book began by examining the hidden bureaucratic procedures that underpinned the raising of a fleet in the fourteenth century. It showed that behind what, on the surface, looks like a simple procedure was in fact a complex operation organised by a skilled administrative staff who were capable of organising large numbers of men and ships and deploying them, at the same point in time, into functioning fleets. The book also examined the maritime contribution to the logistical operation and showed that its support in this process was perhaps the

¹ Cf., J. Sherborne, 'The cost of English warfare with France', which demonstrates that the warfare between 1369 and 1380 was both intensive and costly.

² This process is amply dealt with by D. Simpkin, *The English aristocracy at war*, particularly Chapter 1.

³ This is an important point to note. For example, K. B. McFarlane, 'War, the economy and social change: England and the hundred years war', *Past and Present* 22 (July, 1962), pp. 3–18 makes no mention of the maritime element of the campaigns or the manpower, and money, required to put it into operation when he discusses the effects of the war on England, even though he includes a detailed analysis of the land-based armies in his account and what effect raising such numbers of men had on society. However, M. M. Postan, 'The cost of the Hundred Years War', did include the maritime manpower in his assessment.

most important part of any campaign, underpinning the land-based expeditions of the period. In fact the process of collecting and distributing victuals by sea was as complex as the methods employed when raising a fleet. The campaigns in Scotland, regardless of whether they were successful or not, were proven to be supported by meticulous planning of supply provision. In addition to the arrangements made for invading armies, it was also shown that the survival of English garrisons within Scotland relied on provisioning by sea. With regard to continental wars it was argued that English armies, far from living off the land when campaigning in France, were well supplied with foodstuffs and military equipment. Indeed, if the Reims campaign were included in the overall totals recorded in Table 2.9, the supply of victuals for continental campaigns would far outstrip those quantities shipped to Scotland.

In the analysis of the transport fleets of the period we discovered that in terms of numbers of ships the English merchant fleet was more than capable of meeting the increasing demands of the crown. Particularly so, because of the methodology adopted here, the overall the number of individual ships recorded in Table 4.2 could be in error by 30 per cent, which would still mean that relatively large numbers of vessels operated in this period. This study has, therefore, illuminated the vital role played by England's maritime communities in the wars of Edward II and Edward III. Their commitment to the expeditions of these two kings in terms of manpower and money was equal to that of the land-based elements of the campaigns. Furthermore, the reign of Edward III witnessed a series of administrative experiments designed to simplify the fleet raising procedures. These new developments also had the advantage of decreasing the complaints from the merchant class and parliament. In short, the sophisticated administrative systems developed by Edward III unlocked and tapped into the resources that the crown required in order to prosecute a largely successful continental war after 1340.

The number of ships that participated throughout the campaigns in Scotland and France was immense, and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the English merchant fleet in the fourteenth century was larger than has been previously appreciated. When we consider the involvement of thousands of mariners with the demands for supplies, and the system that ensured their collection, as well as taking into account the land-based forces that also operated concurrently with these two facets of the war effort, it can be stated fairly conclusively that England's population felt the effects of total war. From 1322 to 1360 there was not a single manor, vill, town or port that did not supply foodstuffs, military supplies, manpower, ships or the other materiel of war. Every section of the population from the peasant to the king was involved in the wars of the period. The peasants worked the land which supplied the food; the merchants and clerks arranged for this to be collected, stored and distributed it to the armies; the merchant marine provided the instruments to freight provender, horses and men to the theatres of war; the landed gentry supplied the brute force required for the *chevauchées* and battles of the wars; and the clergy prayed for success in the expeditions

whilst issuing propaganda for the kings.⁴ By 1360 England's maritime communities had supplied thousands of ships and tens of thousands of men for service in the campaigns. Indeed, comparisons between the quotations at the beginning of this book and the findings of the study prompts the conclusion that rather than a barrier, a dangerous obstacle that was best crossed infrequently, the sea and the people who worked on it, were the main artery in England's wars, trade and communication with the other kingdoms of Europe. This achievement by England's medieval maritime communities was not forgotten. Nearly five hundred years later, when England faced another threat from the continent, in the guise of Napoleon, the British looked back to the maritime achievements of Edward III to provide them with the inspiration and the courage to face the threat by taking stock of the past victories and successes when the merchant fleet, that of fourteenth-century England, was called upon to take the war to the enemy for its kings.⁵

⁴ For the level of gentry support, see A. Ayton, 'Edward III and the English aristocracy', but see also A. Ayton and P. Preston, *The battle of Crécy*, Chapter 5 in which Dr. Ayton assesses the English army including a discussion on the non-aristocratic element in a major Edwardian army. The wide-ranging affects on the general population of the Scottish and French wars had been noted by W. R. Jones, 'The English church and royal propaganda during the hundred years war', *JBS* 19 (1979), pp. 18–30, p. 18.

⁵ In 1803 an opera was performed at Covent Garden to an important audience by a well-known and famous cast to provide inspiration for the coming naval war against Napoleon. It was entitled *The Fleet of 1342* and was composed by John Braham and Thomas Dibdin and was received with rapturous applause. It can now be found in the rare collections in the Maritime History Museum at Greenwich, PBE 6737.

APPENDIX 1

Ports that Supplied Ships to the Fleets¹

Northern Fleet	Southern Fleet	Foreign Ports
<i>Northumberland</i>	<i>Kent</i>	<i>Ireland</i>
Bamburgh	Aylesford	Cork
Berwick-upon-Tweed	Canterbury	Drogheda
Gosforth	Dover	Dublin
Hartlepool	Faversham	Rosse
Haswell	Greenhithe	Waterford
Newcastle	Hyam	Yoghul
Walerich ²	Hythe	
	Maidstone	<i>Low Countries</i>
<i>Yorkshire</i>	Malhithe	Bruges
Bridlington	Margate	Dunkirk
Doncaster	Medway	Gravelines
Drax	Morne (?)	Middleburgh
Ferriby	New Hythe	Sluys
Fishlake	Northfleet	
Hedon	Puchelseye (?)	<i>Duchy of Aquitaine</i>
Kingston-upon-Hull	Romney	Bayonne
Paull	Sandwich	Bordeaux
Ravensere	Small Hythe	
Ravenserodde	Stonor	<i>Spanish</i>
		Catalonia

¹ In this period the admiralty was divided into two parts. The northern admiralty included all the ports that were located north of the Thames on the east coast. As such any port situated from Canvey Island/Southend-on-Sea to Berwick is classified as part of the northern admiralty. The south and western admiralty included all the ports located from Kent to Cumbria. The counties in the table are organised geographically north to south around the coast, or east to west. The ports are organised in alphabetical order within the county demarcations. A question mark next to a port records that the location of the town is difficult to ascertain. However, in the final accounts submitted to the Exchequer the clerks normally listed the ports in geographical order so if an unknown port is listed with towns that are known to be in a particular county then the unknown port is also assigned to that county. It is important to stress that this is the minimum number of ports that supplied ships to the fourteenth-century. In the 1370s many other ports not listed in the sources concerning 1320–60 provided ships. For example, Langton, Roding, Fobbing, Faxfleet, Emsworth, Padstowe and St Ives all supplied ships to expeditions, whilst the duchy of Aquitaine contributed more vessels in this period that it had done in the 1330s and 1340s, in particular the Gironde River ports provided ships, see BL, Add MS 37494, fols 17v–36v. Interestingly St Ives was called Lanantra which seems a Cornish derivative of Lelant.

² This probably relates to a well known shelter for ships at the mouth of the River Aln. St Waleric was a local saint.

Ravenspur	<i>London/River Thames</i>
Roucliff	Brimham
Scarborough	Greenwich
Stockhithe	King's ships/Tower of London
Swinefleet	Mulbrok
Swinhumber	Wandsworth
Thorne	Westminster
Walkerith (?)	
Whitby	<i>Sussex</i>
Withernsea	Eastbourne
Woodhouse ³	Endleford
York	Hastings
	Hooe
<i>Lincolnshire</i>	Hope
Anderby	Pevensey
Barton-upon-Humber	Rye
Boston	Saltcote
Grimsby	Seaford
Hirnefleet	Shoreham-by-Sea
Horncastle	Winchelsea
Lincoln	
Saltfleet	<i>Hampshire</i>
Spalding	Calcheford
Surfleet	Cauchesworth
Wainfleet-all-Saints	Codelowe (?)
Wyleford (?)	Hamele
	Hannelhoke (Hammelhoke)
<i>Nottinghamshire</i>	Hooke
Gerenthorpe (?)	Keyhaven
Nottingham	Lymington
Radcliffe-on-Trent	Millbrook (Mulbrok)
Wolverton ⁴	Milford-on-Sea
	Newmouthe
<i>Cambridgeshire</i>	Portchester
Wisbech ⁵	Puchelsey
	Southampton
	Totton
	Weseworth (?)

³ There are several places with this name, some being manors and some being hundreds. However, this port appears on the list of northern ships that participated in the Crécy expedition. Further, it is sandwiched in-between York, Stockhithe and Barton, which suggest that it was in Yorkshire or Lincolnshire, see BL, Harleian MS 3968, fol. 132r.

⁴ Wolverton is close to the River Ouse and although it is in Buckinghamshire it appears on a list of ships arrested from the northern ports (C47/2/30, m.2) so it is presumed that this ship was a river craft that sailed through Nottinghamshire. The Ouse was one of the four great rivers of England and had a vibrant river transport system, see J. F. Willard, 'Inland transportation in England during the fourteenth century', *Speculum*, vol. 1, no. 4 (1926), pp. 361–74, pp. 371–72.

⁵ Wisbech is in Cambridgeshire but is near King's Lynn and in medieval times was only some four miles from the sea. It is now located eleven miles from open water.

Norfolk	Isle of Wight
Birhale (?)	Freshwater
Cleye	Quarr Abbey
Cromer	St Helens
Finnes (?)	
Great Yarmouth	Dorset
Guston	Lyme Regis
Heacham	Melcombe Regis
Holme	Poole
King's Lynn	Wareham
Little Yarmouth	Weymouth
Mainstre (?)	
Mimsele (?)	Devon
Munisele	Barnstaple
Salthouse	Dartmouth
Sheringham	Exeter
Synterle (?)	Exmouth
Waleton	Ilfracombe
Wiverton	Kingswere
Whitlowenes (?)	Ottermouth
Wiggenhall St Germain	Plymouth
Wiggenhall St Mary	Seaton
Magdalene	Sidemouth
Wrangel	Teignmouth
	Totnes
Suffolk	
Denatre	Cornwall
Dunwich	Falmouth
Felixstowe	Fowey
Hadleigh	Looe
Holtham (?)	Mousehole
Ipswich	Mount (?) ⁶
Kirkley	Polruan
Lowestoft	Yalme ⁷
Orford	Waderoth
Thornham	
Essex	Somerset
Blackneye	Bristol
Brightlingsea	Bridgwater
Colchester	Burnham-on-Sea
Derwen (?)	
Fobbing	Gloucestershire
Fordham	Stroud
Gosford	
Maldon	
Millefleet (?)	

⁶ This could be St Michael's Mount, a place which would have possessed ships in this period.

⁷ This was located near Padstow.

Mersea	<i>Welsh Ports</i>
Salcott	Cardiff
Whithanes (?)	Cardigan (Ceredigion)
	Carmarthen
	Chepstow
<i>Unknown ports from the northern fleet</i>	Haverford
Fenele (E101/27/22)	Monmouth
Galdey (E101/19/38)	Swansea
Gettonsthorpe (E101/27/22)	Tenby
Powelflete (E101/27/22)	Tessercoombe (?)
Saltburgh (C47/2/30)	Herwyt (?)
Tychefeld (E101/17/3)	<i>Cheshire</i>
Wulfrestan ⁸	Chester
	<i>Lancashire</i>
	Liverpool
	<i>Cumbria</i>
	Skinburness

⁸ This was likely to be the priory of Wulfreston. It is difficult to pinpoint from where they provided their ships owing to the fact that this priory held lands in various places.

APPENDIX 2

Reconstructing the Merchant Fleet: A Methodology

The methodology that has been used to calculate the individual ships in Table 4.2 was achieved by matching three 'identifiers' that the sources consistently provide. Thus, if a particular ship name from a certain port appears with the same master in the records of more than one expedition it is counted once. As such Table 4.2 takes account of those ships and masters that we know served on more than one occasion. This method can still give rise to both overestimates and underestimates of vessel numbers, due to double counting and unidentified linkages. To compensate for this we can analyse the repetition of ship names from certain ports. Those ships sailing in the same fleet with the same name would provide a minimum number of ships with that name sailing from that port. Finally, we can also assess the repetition of service amongst shipmasters. A large number of masters serving repeatedly would suggest that the merchant marine was small, whereas a small number of repeat servers would argue for a large pool of shipmasters, and thus a larger merchant marine. This methodology in its simplest form would be as follows: Robert Tynwit, a shipmaster from Great Yarmouth, operated the same ship, the *Nicholas*, on three separate occasions. This, of course, could be three individual ships, all with the same name, which would mean the individual ship totals in Table 4.2 would be underestimates. But Tynwhit also commanded a ship called the *Bartholomew* in 1347, and thus following the methodology applied in this book although he made four separate voyages he did so in two ships.¹ Alternatively, John Shipman of Hythe commanded the *Nicholas* in 1336 and 1337, and in 1335 the *Cog Johan*, so although he served three times he did so in only two vessels.² Ship size can also play a part in the methodology. For example, in 1355 John Bethe commanded the *Margrete* out of Sandwich and it is possible that this could be the same *Margrete* that sailed in 1362 commanded by John Frensh. Fortunately, the sources tell us that the *Margrete* of 1355 was 60 tuns burden, while the *Margrete* of 1362 was 116 tuns burden.³ It can also be the case that the same ship operated out of different ports with different masters. In 1338 Robert Goderich took command of the *Mariot* in the port of Colchester

¹ Robert Tynwhit served as master of the *Nicholas* for the first time in the 1338 transport fleet, he fought at the battle of Sluys in 1340 as master of the *Nicholas*, and he captained the *Nicholas* in 1342 when he transported the king to Brittany. He was master of the *Bartholomew* during the siege of Calais. See E101/21/10, m. 5; E101/22/25, m. 1; E36/204, p. 235; E101/25/24, no. 23.

² E101/19/22, m. 3v; E101/19/38, m. 7; E101/19/39, m. 3.

³ E101/26/37, m. 2; E101/28/24, m. 1.

and sailed this vessel from 17 June until 20 July. On 21 July, however, a different master, Ralph Goderich, took command of this same ship but in the port of Blackeney and continued to operate it until 2 August.⁴ Considering these issues and examining ship names, the service records of thousands of shipmasters over more than 150 ports along with ship tunngaes means the methodology has more complex dimensions to it. Broadly, this means examining each individual port's ships and masters and comparing these with each other before moving on to an examination of the ships and masters from neighbouring ports. At the same time different ports' vessels must be compared with each other in order to see if the same ship was arrested in a different port from one year to the next.

Although this method is liable to a margin of error it does nonetheless seem to offer the most accurate means of assessing the contribution of England's maritime resources to the king's wars between 1320 and 1360. Linking the ship name to a master's name and the port of origin also lessens the chance of over calculation when each port is individually assessed. Of the 4,065 individual ships in operation throughout 1320–60, it is possible to know the names of 2,793. Some 1,266 ships do not appear with their name in the sources or they are absent from the records.⁵ With regard to ship names there are six that appear with the greatest frequency. Out of the 2,793 vessels with known names 248 were called *Nicholas*, 180 were called *Seintemariécog*, 125 were named *Blithe*, 131 *James*, sixty-one were called *Rodecog* and forty-seven were named *Margarete*.⁶

⁴ E36/203, p. 382; E101/21/12, m. 3. The *Mariot* was recorded as 160 tuns burden and was operated by fifty-eight seafarers with Robert and fifty-six with Ralph.

⁵ The 747 Crécy ships cannot be named and nor can 117 from the Brittany campaign; some ships serving in 1333 cannot be named. There are forty-nine vessels from the Black Prince's fleet of 1355 that have no known names due to the damage of one of the documents. There are other ships that served in various campaigns in Scotland and in the French war that are also not named in the sources, including the eighty ships that transported Balliol's army of 1332, the Cinque Port ships that possibly served in 1322, 1327 and 1333, the thirteen ships that transported Ralph Stafford to Gascony, and some of the vessels employed to transport Oliver Ingham in 1342. See E101/15/9; E101/16/6, m. 6; E101/18/36, m. 9; E101/21/33; E101/26/36/; E101/26/38; E101/27/22, m. 1; E101/27/23, m. 1; BL, Stowe MS 553, fols 76r, 76v; BL, Cotton MS, Nero C.VIII, fols 246v, 265v C47/2/25, nos. 12, 13; E372/179, mm. 43, 44; E372/187, mm. 43, 44; E36/204, p. 240; CCR, 1318–23, p. 660; CCR, 1333–37, pp. 367; CCR, 1337–39, p. 46; CCR, 1343–46, pp. 128–32; CPR, 1327–30, p. 104; CPR, 1334–38, p. 98; CPR, 1338–40, pp. 85, 366. Rot. Scot. I, pp. 226, 232, 233, 234, 248–9, 255. The chance that a ship would have its named changed at some point during its life should also be considered. However, it is unlikely that this occurred on a large-scale and therefore would not alter the margin of error greatly. Note also that fifty-nine ships out of the 2,793 were foreign.

⁶ BL, Add MS 7967, fols 94v, 95r, 95v, 97v, 98v, 99r, 99v; BL, Cotton MS, Nero C.VIII, fols 264r, 265r, 266r; BL, Stowe MS 553, fols 76v, 77r; E101/15/36; E101/16/6, m. 2; E101/16/34; E101/16/40; E101/17/3, mm. 1b, 6b, 7, 8; E101/17/4, m. 2; E101/17/10, mm. 1, 2; E101/17/24, mm. 4, 4d; E101/17/25, m. 4d; E101/17/35; E101/18/3; E101/18/9; E101/18/28, m. 2; E101/18/31, m. 1; E101/18/36, m. 2; E101/19/2, m. 4; E101/19/3, m. 8; E101/19/6, mm. 2, 3, 4; E101/19/11; E101/19/14; E101/19/16, mm. 2, 2d, 3, 4; E101/19/22, mm. 1, 2v, 3v, 6d; E101/19/28, mm. 3, 4, 7; E101/19/32; E101/19/38, mm. 3, 4, 7; E101/19/39, E101/20/1 mm. 2, 3; E101/20/4, m. 7, 8;

Yet if we take this down to the level of individual campaigns we can see that repetition of particular names does not appear to be significant. To take the name *Nicholas* as an example: sixty-nine ports supplied all the 248 ships called the *Nicholas* over the forty years covered by this study. The port contributing the largest number of vessels with this name was Great Yarmouth (34); indeed, this town supplied a ship called the *Nicholas* to every campaign in the period from 1322 to 1359. When the vessels from this port called the *Nicholas* are examined more closely we can see that only two masters served on board a ship with this name more than once over the forty years.⁷ If we take this example further and examine the frequency that the name *Nicholas* occurs within individual transport fleets, it is possible to say that between 1338 and 1340, and out of two fleets numbering 450 individual ships, only twenty-eight vessels were named the *Nicholas*.⁸ Neither are the results from the name *Nicholas* any different in this regard and when we analyse other ship names we encounter similar findings. For example, if we examine the frequency which the name *Seintemariēcog* appeared in the 1338 and 1340 Flanders transport fleets we find only twelve ships called the *Seintemariēcog*. This pattern is repeated throughout different armadas. For instance, in 1342 within the fleet that transported Edward III's army to Brittany we find only thirty-three vessels out of 675 ships were named the *Seintemariēcog*, and these were supplied by as many as twenty-five ports. When we investigate the repetition of ship names within individual ports, we also find similar low numbers of vessels with the same name. Out of all the 347 ships supplied by Great Yarmouth from 1320 to 1360 only two were called *Seintemariēcog*, thirty-four were called *Nicholas* and twenty-three were named *James*.⁹ Great Yarmouth was not unusual in this and London, for example, supplied eighty ships to the

E101/20/6; E101/20/16; E101/20/34, m. 1; E101/21/4, m. 7; E101/21/7, mm. 2, 3; E101/21/10, mm. 3, 4, 5; E101/21/13, m. 3; E101/27/15; E101/21/33; E101/22/25, mm. 1, 2, 3, 4; E101/23/22; E101/25/9; E101/25/20, nos. 6, 13, 15, 30, 31, 35; E101/25/24, nos. 2, 17, 21, 24, 25, 26, 29, 31, 34, 43, 47, 49; E101/26/36; E101/26/38, m. 2; E101/27/19; E101/27/24, mm. 1, 2; E101/27/25, m. 2; E101/389/8, m. 16; E101/556/37; *Norwell*, pp. 363–86; E36/204, pp. 221–40; C47/2/25, nos. 9, 10, 15; C47/2/30, mm. 1, 1d, 2, 2d; CCR, 1318–23, pp. 453, 591; CCR, 1333–37, pp. 290, 348; CCR, 1339–41, pp. 143, 207; CCR, 1343–46, pp. 128–32; CPR, 1321–24, pp. 14, 77, 288; CPR, 1327–30, pp. 27, 104; CPR, 1334–38, p. 536; CPR, 1338–40, pp. 491–92; *Rot. Scot. I*, p. 530; SC1/40, no. 10.

⁷ The first was Robert Tynwit who served in the 1338 Flanders fleet, the battle of Sluys and the 1342 Brittany fleet. Tynwit also served during the siege of Calais in 1347, but on that occasion he commanded the *Berthelmeu* of 180 tons from Great Yarmouth. The other master was John Norman who served in 1338 and 1342. For Tynwit's service, see E101/21/10, m. 5; E101/22/25, m. 1; E101/25/24, n. 23. For Norman's service, see E101/21/10, m. 5; E101/21/13, m. 3; E36/204, p. 234.

⁸ Twenty-four ships from the 1338 fleet went on to serve at the battle of Sluys.

⁹ E101/16/40, m. 1; E101/20/4 m. 8; E101/20/16; E101/21/10, m. 5; E101/22/25, mm. 1–4; E101/25/9; E101/25/22; E101/25/24; E101/26/38; E101/27/22, m. 3; E101/27/25, m. 2; E36/204, pp. 234, 235; *Norwell*, pp. 379–382; C47/2/25 no. 15; CPR, 1327–30, p. 104; CPR, 1338–40, p. 492

campaigns of the period and only five of these were called the *Seintemarielog*.¹⁰ In short because of the pattern of ships names the prospects for double counting to affect the overall total of individual ships is small.

Nevertheless, it is still probable that the same ship from a particular port had different masters from one campaign to the next. What we can examine, however, is how many ships with the same name served at the same time; this would provide us with the minimum number of vessels with that name, from that chosen port. Such an analysis of several ports from both admiralties shows that anywhere between a 20 and 30 per cent margin of error could be applied to the individual ships numbers in Table 4.2. For example, the port of Newcastle contributed 117 ships to campaigns in Scotland and in France between 1322 and 1360. If we analyse in detail the individual ship names we can determine how many appear with regularity throughout the period, and this will provide some indication of the possible extent of the double counting problem. In all there are fifty different ship names for the port of Newcastle with the most popular names being; *Trinite*, *Seintemaribot*, *Blithe*, *Nicholas* and *Godyer*. There were seven vessels called *Seintemaribot*, and these sailed in naval operations in 1334, 1335, 1336, 1337 and 1339. However, only one master, Robert Trym, served on board a ship with this name more than once (he served in three victual operations between 1334 and 1339 in Scotland).¹¹ Moreover, different masters commanded all five ships called *Nicholas* that served between 1337 and 1359,¹² and the same applies to the ten ships called *Trinite*, which served in five campaigns between 1337 and 1359. Following the three-identifier methodology all the vessels named *Trinite* would be counted as individuals because they were commanded by different masters. However, by examining how many ships with the same name sailed at the same time, we could potentially reduce the ten vessels called the *Trinite* to three individual ships. For example, three ships called the *Trinite* sailed in the Scottish campaign of 1335 and a further three more served in the Brittany fleet of 1342. These potential six ships could, however, be the same three vessels used on different occasions by different shipmasters.¹³ Indeed, if we were to say that only those ships that served at the same time, with the same name were individual vessels Newcastle's maritime contribution could be reduced by 32 per cent.¹⁴

¹⁰ BL, Cotton MS, Nero C.VIII, fols 265r, 266v; BL, Add MS 7967, fol. 99r; E101/16/40, main roll; E101/18/35 p. 5d; E101/19/3, m. 8; E101/20/39 nos. 37, 38, 46; *Norwell*, pp. 363–365; E36/204, pp. 221–222; E101/25/9; CCR, 1318–23 pp. 660–1; *Rot. Scot.* I, p. 523.

¹¹ BL, Cotton MS, Nero C.VIII, fols 265r, 266r; E101/19/6, mm. 2, 2d; E101/21/4, m. 7; C47/2/30, m. 1d.

¹² C47/2/30, mm. 1, 1d; E101/26/38; E101/27/22, m. 1.

¹³ BL, Cotton MS, Nero C.VIII fol. 264v; E101/20/34, m. 1; C47/2/30, m. 1, 1d; E101/26/38; E101/27/22, m. 1.

¹⁴ The six most popular ship names from each port were analysed first. The popularity of ship names varied between ports. However, the 'sample' was extended further to include all the names of ships from a particular port that served more than once. The findings show that the percentage of error that could be applied by using the six most popular names is between

When we apply the same methodology to other ports we find similar results. For example, between 1333 and 1355 eight ships called the *Nicholas* sailed from the port of Hull (Hull's total ship provision was 158); but only a maximum of two vessels with this name sailed in the same fleet, therefore, these eight ships could actually be the same two vessels repeatedly arrested but with different masters. Similarly, in Hull there were eleven ships called *Godyer* that served between 1324 and 1345, but only a maximum of two served concurrently in any one expedition of the period. There were four ships called *Blithe* and these served in four separate campaigns all with different masters. And of the seven ships from Hull called *Leonard* a maximum of two served in any one campaign.¹⁵ Taking all the names of the vessels that served more than once, and if we assume that only those ships with the same name that served at the same time were individual vessels, Hull's overall shipping contribution to the maritime dimension of the war could be reduced by 27 percent.¹⁶

An examination of three ports from the southern admiralty provides similar results. Winchelsea's overall ship provision of 136 individual vessels could be reduced by 14 per cent over the six most popular names and by 22 per cent if we were to extend the methodology to all the ships name variants within this port. Sandwich's overall contribution of 104 ships would be decreased by 20 per cent and London's eighty ships by 18 per cent.¹⁷ As these percentages suggest it is possible that up to a third of the vessels recorded in Table 4.2 could be double counted. However, it is worth noting that repeat service between transport fleets

14 to 19, while the inclusion of all the ships that sailed more than once raises this to 25 to 30 per cent.

¹⁵ BL, Add MS 7967, fol. 99v; BL, Cotton MS, Nero C.VIII, fol. 266v; *Foedera*, II, ii, p. 912; E101/16/40, roll 1; E101/18/28, m. 2; E101/18/31, m. 1; E101/19/3, m. 8; E101/19/6, m. 1; E101/21/4, m. 7; C47/2/30, m. 1; C47/2/35; CCR, 1343–46 pp. 126–32; E101/25/9; E101/25/20 no. 13; E101/25/24, nos. 41, 42.; E101/26/38, m. 2.

¹⁶ Further, Boston's contribution could be reduced by 47 per cent; King's Lynn would be decreased by 26 per cent; Great Yarmouth's contribution would be reduced by 19 per cent using the six most popular names and 32 per cent if we included all the ships that served more than once at the same time and with the same name; Ipswich's overall shipping contribution could be reduced by 27 per cent, and Colchester's by 21 per cent. See CPR, 1321–24 p. 205; CCR, 1333–37 p. 348; CCR, 1343–46, p. 132; C47/2/30; E101/16/40; E101/18/3; E101/18/31; E101/19/16, mm. 1, 2, 2d, 3; E101/19/32; E101/20/1; E101/20/34, m. 1; E101/21/7, m. 2; E101/21/10, m. 3; E101/21/12, m. 2; E101/25/9; E101/25/24, no. 35; E101/25/24, nos. 1, 6–10; E101/26/38, m. 2; E101/27/22, mm. 3, 4; E101/27/23; E101/27/24; E101/27/25, m. 2; BL, Stowe MS 553, fol. 77r; BL, Add MS 7967, fols 98v, 99r; Norwell, pp. 378, 382–83; E36/204, pp. 232–33; E372/179, m. 44; C47/2/30, mm.1, 1d, 2, 2d.

¹⁷ BL, Add MS 7967, fols 97v, 98v, 99r, 99v; E101/16/40, main roll; BL, Cotton MS, Nero C.VIII, fols 264r, 265r; CPR, 1327–30, pp. 10, 104; CCR, 1339–41, p. 143; E101/17/10, mm. 1, 2; CCR, 1343–46, pp. 128–32; E101/17/24, m. 4d; E101/18/3; E101/19/2, m. 4; E101/19/28; E101/19/32; E101/19/38, m. 2; E101/19/39, m. 3; E101/20/4, m. 8; E101/20/7; E101/20/16; E101/20/34, m. 1; E101/21/10, mm. 2, 4, 5; E101/21/33; E101/21/36; E101/22/25, mm. 1, 2, 3, 4; E101/25/9; E101/25/20, nos. 15, 16; E101/26/18; E101/26/38; E101/27/22, m. 3; E101/27/25, m. 2; E101/27/37; E101/389/8, m. 16; C47/2/25, no. 15; E101/27/24 m. 3.

was infrequent, which provides another compelling reason to be confident that double counting is not a significant problem. For example, by applying the three identifier methodology to the 1,320 ships that sailed as transport vessels in 1338, 1340, 1342 and 1345 only ninety-two ships, or 7 per cent, of these vessels served in more than one of these armadas. Furthermore, there is also the fact that we are missing the evidence from the major royal fleets of 1340, 1345, 1355 and 1359, which means that there are possibly as many as 1,000 ships unaccounted for in this evidence.¹⁸

A further methodological complication, related to the problems of double counting, arises from the difficulty of estimating the lifespan of medieval ships. The king's vessels, however, provide the perfect case study to investigate this because they usually served in every expedition and we have a rich seam of source material relating to them. By examining the evidence it can be seen that the *Cog Thomas*, *Cog Edward* and *Rodecog* served for over twenty years.¹⁹ The *Rodecog* began its service in 1335 during the Scottish campaign of that year and continued to sail in 1336 and 1338 (Flanders and Gascony). This vessel was still in operation in 1354 before sailing for the last time in the Reims campaign of 1359. Apart from its last outing, the ship was commanded by Hugh Reppes on every occasion.²⁰ The *Cog Edward* began its service in 1336 and was still operational in 1354 after participating in four expeditions commanded by Thomas Springet.²¹ The *Cog Thomas* also served over a twenty-year period. It began operations in 1338 and was in continual use between 1339 and 1340. In 1342 it formed part of the armada that transported the king to Brittany, after which a gap appears in its service record before it sailed to St Vaast-la-Hougue in the fleet of 1346. This ship was also present at the battle Les Espagnols sur Mer in 1350, but disappears after 1359. Throughout its long career it had three masters, Robert Salmon, Richard Fille and John Willie.²² That medieval ships could have a lifespan of twenty years or more is also evidenced in the mid-Tudor period. For example,

¹⁸ In addition, the fleet that engaged with the Spanish vessels off Winchelsea is absent from the sources as is the fleet that transported Edward to Calais in 1350. Furthermore, there are several documents that have not been used by this book as they are outside the parameters of the research topic (for example, E101/27/5 that lists fifty-one ships that have not been included). Moreover, there are numerous payrolls, such as E101/26/5, mm. 1–4, which records the wages paid to thirteen ships' crews for the freighting of wool in royal ships.

¹⁹ The king on occasions possessed two ships with the same name. However, the three ships used as examples here do seem to be the only royal vessels with those names, see G. R. Cushway, 'The lord of the sea', p. 97.

²⁰ BL, Cotton MS, Nero C.VIII, fol. 246r; CPR, 1333–37, p. 692; Norwell, p. 364; E101/20/39, nos. 2, 4, 25, 26, 29; H. J. Hewitt, *The organisation of war*, p. 79; E101/27/15, m. 2. Reppes appears as the master of the same ship on E101/27/5, which has been dated to 1356.

²¹ Norwell, p. 363; CCR, 1333–37, p. 692; CPR, 1334–38, p. 387; E101/19/3, m. 8; E101/20/39, no. 3; H. J. Hewitt, *The organisation of war*, p. 79.

²² Norwell, p. 363; E101/389/8, m. 16; E101/20/39, nos. 4, 9, 10; D. Hannay, *A short history of the royal navy*, p. 24; E101/27/15, m. 2.

the *Mary Walsingham* of Dunwich was in service from 1524 to 1548, while the *Sabin* of Ipswich was at sea for thirty years.²³ What this short discussion of the king's ships illuminates is that medieval vessels could remain on active service for decades.²⁴ Indeed, given the nature of the service that the king's ships were engaged in, which included two fiercely fought battles, it is possible that vessels operating in a much safer environment could provide a longer life of service for their owners.

It could be argued, however, that the king's ships are not a good indicator of potential lifespan owing to the fact that they would have been regularly maintained. This being said it was by no means certain that royal ships were sufficiently repaired at all times. In July 1346 the king's ship *George* was delivered to Stephen Padiham and Henry Finch of Winchelsea by Thomas de Snetesham and Robert Salmon. Finch and Padiham were expected to 'keep it safely at their peril' and they had seemingly formed an indenture with Snetesham and Salmon to care for and repair the ship. However, only days after this vessel had been in their care it began 'to be broken up by misfortune in the port of the town, when it might have been saved if Henry and Stephen had shown diligence.'²⁵ This shows that in some cases the king in effect 'farmed' out the repair of his ships to other shipowners who did not always provide suitable or sufficient service. As such we should perhaps not assume that royal vessels were better maintained than other merchant ships.

Although the king's ships may not provide the perfect examples to estimate lifespan, because of the richness of the source material generated by the clerk of the king's ships they do nevertheless offer the best way of tracing the same vessels over periods of time. Can we, however, extend this methodology to ships from the general merchant fleet and find examples of vessels that had continuous and repeated service over more than ten years? This is difficult owing to that fact that we are missing payroll evidence from the 1340, 1345/46, 1350, 1355 and 1359 expeditions. Nevertheless, it is still possible to see evidence of the same ship, commanded by the same man, serving over a long period of time. Adam Permay from Boston commanded the *George* in 1342, 1355 and 1359.²⁶ Similarly, Ralph Gardiner sailed the same ship, the *Sefray*, from Gosforth, in 1338, 1340, 1342, and 1345, and John Frese commanded the *Margrete* from Dunwich in 1327 and

²³ G.V. Scammell, 'Shipowning in England', p. 109.

²⁴ R. Malcomson, 'The longevity of wooden warships: the Great Lakes example', *MM* 89 (2003), pp. 425–36, pp. 426, 472, 433 notes that even wooden ships that were laid up throughout harsh winters in areas where there were no dry docks, no sufficient dockyards, no store houses or work shops and in which warfare was commonplace could survive for thirty-one years, with the majority of vessels between 1750 and 1830 serving between ten and twenty years.

²⁵ CCR, 1346–49, p. 95.

²⁶ C47/2/35; E101/26/38, m. 2; E101/27/31, m. 1.

again in 1342, showing that this ship was operational for nearly twenty years.²⁷ Another shipmaster with regular service in command of the same vessel was John de Wyndesore of Poole. Wyndesore commanded the *Blithe* on no fewer than five occasions between 1325 and 1338. He first took charge of the ship in 1325 when *Blithe* participated in the earl of Surrey's transport flotilla to Gascony. In the following year Wyndesore along with the *Blithe* was called upon to form part of a defensive fleet that was designed to halt the landing of Queen Isabella and Roger Mortimer. Wyndesore's final appearance as master of the *Blithe* came in 1338 when both he and the ship formed part of the transport armada that freighted Edward III to the Low Countries.²⁸ This evidence shows that Wyndesore and the *Blithe* had a record of service together stretching over thirteen years. Indeed, the findings here are supported by other studies which show that some vessels have 'traceable' trading lives of thirteen or more years.²⁹ This short analysis clearly suggests that vessels could provide a life of service for twenty or more years. Consequently, although the method used throughout this book is in danger of both overestimating and underestimating the numbers of individual ships that sailed in the wars, the use of the three identifiers coupled with the fact that there is not much repetition of ship names in separate campaigns, should lessen its impact on the accuracy of the tabulated information. Indeed, it is argued here that conflation and double counting will probably account for no more than 30 per cent of the totals.³⁰

²⁷ C47/2/35; E101/18/3; E101/389/8, m. 16; CPR, 1343–46, pp. 128–32.

²⁸ E101/17/3, m. 7; E1012/17/24, m. 4; E10119/38, m. 3; E101/19/39, m. 3; E101/21/7, m. 3.

²⁹ See, for example, W. R. Childs, 'Irish merchants and seamen', pp. 31–32.

³⁰ It is also worth noting that to some extent, conflation and double counting will cancel each other out. This is especially so when the numbers involved are large.

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